

A LIEUTENANT UNDER WASHINGTON

EVERETT T. TOMLINSON

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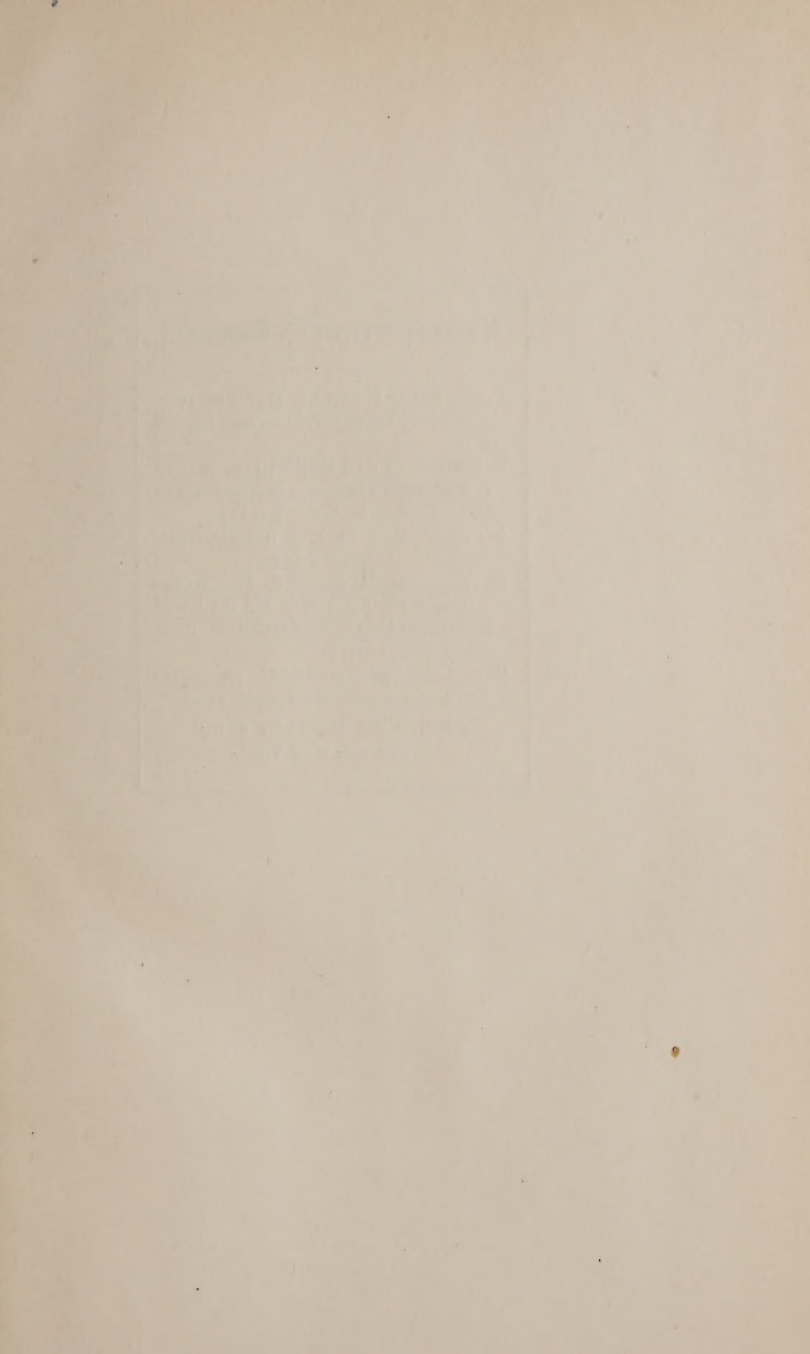
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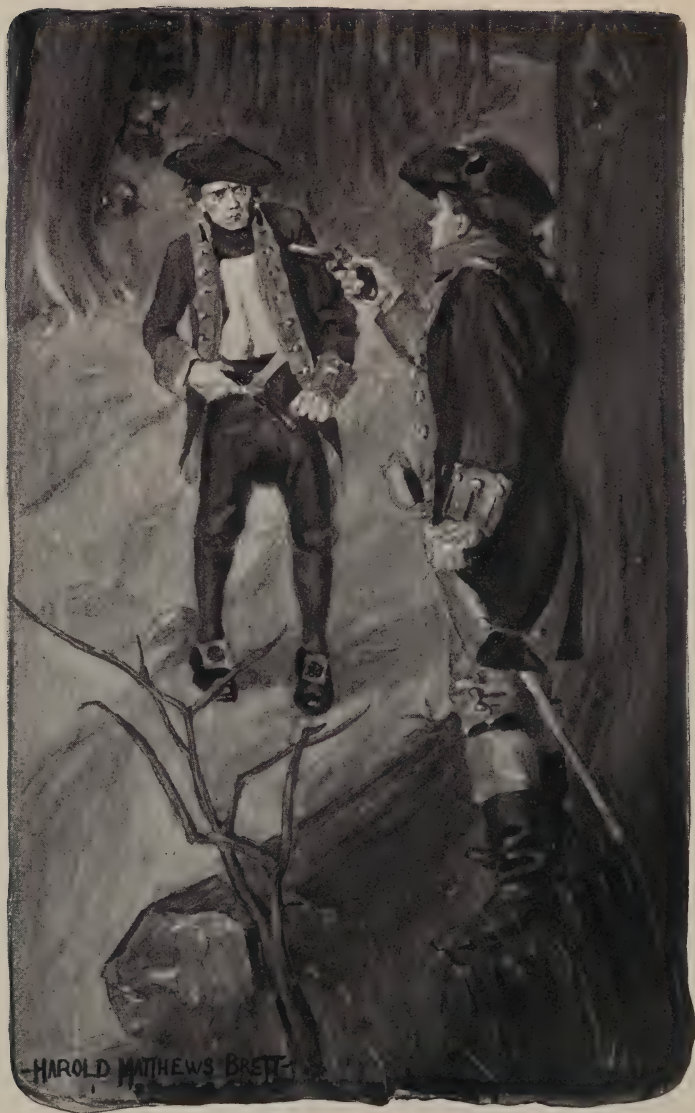
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A LIEUTENANT UNDER
WASHINGTON



RESOLUTELY THE YOUNG LIEUTENANT ADVANCED (page 248)

A LIEUTENANT UNDER WASHINGTON

A Tale of the Brandywine and Germantown

BY

EVERETT T. TOMLINSON

AUTHOR OF "THE BOYS OF OLD MONMOUTH," "IN THE HANDS OF THE
REDCOATS," "UNDER COLONIAL COLORS," "WARD HILL AS
WESTON," "CAMPING IN THE ST. LAWRENCE," ETC., ETC.



BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN AND COMPANY
The Riverside Press, Cambridge
1903

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Published October 1903

PREFACE

IN this tale I have endeavored to interest my young readers in some of the stirring events of that famous year of 1777. The battles, although they were not all won, were nevertheless not lost, for they all helped to develop and reveal the true men who were indeed the fathers of our country.

The basis of most of the incidents used was found in early and "out of print" books, so that the story in a measure is "true." The experiences of the hardy men are no less a real part of our history than were the battles fought. The heroism they displayed ought to be inspiring, though to-day the "hero" may never be called upon to display his power by bearing arms. Courage, patience, fortitude, and hope are qualities of life that are ever in demand.

If an interest shall be aroused in the history of our country by the reading of this story, and the young people be led to make further investigations of their own, the writer will feel that his labor has not been in vain.

EVERETT T. TOMLINSON.

ELIZABETH, NEW JERSEY.

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A LIEUTENANT UNDER WASHINGTON

CHAPTER I

A FALSE ALARM

"It's a long waiting we are having here, Hugh."

"There might be worse things than waiting."

"That's true, but we didn't come here to do nothing."

"‘Nothing’? Do you call it ‘nothing’ we’ve been doing this summer, Lieutenant? To my mind, it’s a great trick the general has played on Cornwallis. Just think how busy he’s kept his lordship all summer long. He wouldn’t give the redcoats the chance to fight in the open they wanted, and yet General Washington has held every man Jack of them right here in Jersey at Amboy, or kept them cooped up in New York like a hen with chickens. They could n’t go up the Hudson to help John Burgoyne, and though they’ve

tried to make us believe they were going to strike Boston or Philadelphia they haven't forced our man. They knew, I'm thinking, it wouldn't be just safe to leave New York so that General Washington could have the chance to show what he could do with his army there. No, sir, Lieutenant! It's the best kind of work we've been doing all summer long!" As he spoke the elder man lifted his eyes from the frying-pan he was holding out over the fire and gazed reprov-ingly at the young officer who was seated on the ground near him. "Besides," he added thoughtfully, as he once more gave his atten-tion to the task of preparing supper, "it is n't too late yet for the waiting to stop and the work to begin."

"I know it, Hugh; I know it's just as you say," replied the young lieutenant quickly. "But there are a good many of the men who are becoming hard to manage. Ever since General Washington gave out his order about gambling and foraging, it seems as if every one was almost ready to break out in some way. It keeps the officers busy, I can tell you!"

"What would you have him do?" de-manded his friend. "Take it all back?"

“No, not that; I’m not complaining, only it’s hard, that’s all I mean. I went past the tavern,¹ and I saw the general come out and jump on the back of that little bay pony of his — you know the horse, don’t you, Hugh?”

“To be sure I do. I never see it without wondering why such a big man as the general is, should ride such a small horse. His stirrups almost touch the ground when he is on its back.”

“I know it. It is strange; but the horse is a beauty, and can go like the wind. The redcoats would have plenty to do if they tried to chase him when he was on the back of that little bay. I saw him start out this afternoon, as I was telling you, and there was n’t any one with him either, except his mulatto boy, Bill; but the way in which he started off made me think there might be something going on that would make it interesting for us all, he seemed to be so stirred up.”

“You can’t tell by any such trick as that,” said Hugh, shaking his head. “That’s the way he has of doing everything, — he just acts as if he thought everything he did was

¹ Freeman’s tavern, General Washington’s headquarters at Morristown, N. J., in 1777.

the most important thing in the whole world. I believe that if he had to polish his own spurs, he'd do it with all his might, mind, and strength. It does n't seem to make any difference to him whether the matter is big or little, he just goes right at it as if that was the one thing that must be done right and done then. It's a trick he has."

"All I can say is, then," laughed the young officer, "that I wish there was more of the same feeling among the men. I'm sure I find it hard to keep the men under me up to any sort of a mark."

"That's just it. That's just it," said Hugh soberly.

"What's just it? I don't see what you mean."

"That's just the reason why some men will always have to do what others tell 'em to, and others have to tell 'em what to do. They're born that way, and can't help it any more'n a hound dog can help chasing a buck. An' then they wonder why 't is that some has the good luck to be made officers and lord it over the others, an' why 't is that they can't get the same places for themselves. I tell you 't is n't the nature o' things! When a man slides over his work, an' does n't see what to do, an'

does n't do what he sees, why he's just bound for to be a man to do what others tell him to do, just as long as he draws this 'fleeting breath,' as the psalm tune says. Are n't you a lieutenant, Henry?"

"I suppose I am," replied the young officer with a laugh.

"Well, is n't that just what I was tellin' ye?" demanded the elder man, with an expression of intense pride on his face.

"But you're a sergeant, are n't you, Hugh?"

"Humph! What's a sergeant 'longside o' a lieutenant?"

"He's a mighty good friend to have, I can tell you! rejoined the younger man. "I don't know what would ever have become of me if it had n't been for you, Hugh. I beg pardon, I mean Sergeant."

"I'm good to get your supper and a few things like that, but I've not got brains, same's you have, lad. I've got just sense enough to know that, though, which I'm thinking is more'n some o' the fool soldiers in this army know, who are all the time tryin' to show off and let on how, if they was runnin' things, we'd soon have every Britisher shut up in jail."

“This is better, any way, than tramping through the woods or freezing under the walls of Quebec as we almost did two years ago, Hugh.” The young officer spoke as if he had not heard the words of his comrade. He was seated on the ground in front of a rude little hut which had been erected of logs and slabs. Many structures similar to that could be seen on the hillside, for here the American army under Washington was encamped late in the summer of 1777.

Two years before this time, young Henry Miner, then only a young fellow of eighteen, in company with the trapper, Hugh, had left his Pennsylvania home for the camp of the colonial soldiers at Cambridge. From that place the two men had marched with the little force under Benedict Arnold and after making their way through the wilderness of Maine had laid seige to Quebec.¹ In the disastrous attempt to capture that town, both men had been made prisoners, and, after having undergone a long and dreary confinement in the prisons of the ancient city, had at last been released, carried by sea to New York, and then given again their liberty. But Henry Miner had been for a long time ill because of his

¹ See *Under Colonial Colors*.

suffering on that ill-fated expedition, and therefore unable to reënter the army until the early spring of 1777. A position had been offered him among the famous riflemen of Morgan, but he had preferred to accept the offer of a lieutenancy in a Pennsylvania company, made up, as it was, of men from his own state, many of whom he personally knew. His staunch friend, although the number of his years was double that of Henry's, had again accompanied him, and he too had been enrolled as a sergeant, although he steadily and sturdily protested 'that such a position was far above that to which he was entitled either by his ability or experience.

His devotion to his young friend and his unshaken confidence in his capability were his chief characteristics. There was nothing in his power which he was not eager to do for the young soldier, and the devotion with which he watched over him was not unlike a mother for her child. Young Henry Miner, or Lieutenant Miner, as he was addressed in the army, now a sturdy and vigorous young man of twenty, fully recovered from the severe attack of scurvy from which he had suffered long after his return from Quebec, quick, active, of medium height, of quiet and

somewhat reserved manners, always earnest in whatever he did, was perhaps not entirely unworthy of the affection of his devoted friend, the trapper. At least his father and mother had so believed, when reluctantly they had given their consent for him to join the little army which was struggling to secure the liberties of the scattered colonists.

It was Hugh who had erected the hut in which he and Henry and two others of the younger officers had their quarters; and he it was also who had insisted upon serving as cook. His previous experiences in the forest, when for many weeks at a time he would be away from the settlement and living the lonely life of his calling, had perhaps fitted him to a marked degree for the tasks which he had taken upon himself, from the time when he and Henry Miner had joined the army at Morristown. At all events it was certain that, in spite of the scarcity of provisions and the pressing difficulty of securing rations, few had been served so well as had the young lieutenant and his three messmates. In a general way Henry was aware of the conditions that prevailed in the camp; and how it was that Hugh had provided so well he did not understand. However, as the fact

remained true, with the thoughtlessness of youth he was not disposed to inquire too closely into details, being well content that Hugh was with him, and therefore there was no special cause for anxiety.

"Yes, this *is* better than you had it in the old Dauphin jail, I make no doubt," said Hugh, responding to the remark of the young lieutenant. "But ye see, Lieutenant" — Hugh always insisted upon addressing his friend by his military title, although he was equally insistent that he himself should be called simply Hugh — "I was n't there with ye. If they'd only let me join ye, I might 'a' been able to help ye out a bit. However, that's neither here nor there. This supper's 'bout ready, if I'm not mistaken."

"Shall we wait for the others?"

"Why should we? They ought to know 'nough to come back when it's supper time, an' if they don't, it's no one's fault but their own. Better fall to, lad — I mean Lieutenant — an' they can have what's left."

"But I'm not sure there'll be anything left, Hugh."

"So much the more reason, then, for them to be here on time. Perhaps they'll learn better. Everybody seems to be o' my way o'

thinkin’,” he added, as he glanced along the hillside, where the smoke could be seen rising from many a fire like their own.

Lieutenant Henry Miner was too hungry to require a second bidding, and as the trapper placed on the rude stand, which served as a table, the smoking food he had prepared, he fell to with a will. The sergeant watched him for a moment, a smile of pleasure and pride lighting up his somewhat grim countenance, and it was evident that even in the present task he felt that his protégé would display qualities that certainly ought to commend him to the attention of all observers.

“Come on, Hugh,” called Henry; “are n’t you going to join me?”

“Presently, presently,” replied the sergeant. “I’ll be with you in a minute, — I’ve” —

Suddenly the trapper ceased and the expression upon his face instantly changed. The smile of approval departed, and in its place came a look intent, eager, keen. The young lieutenant, too, leaped to his feet and stood for a moment listening intently to sounds that came up from the valley below.

Dim and indistinct the report of a musket had been heard, and quickly this had been

followed by another nearer the camp. Before the echoes of the report had died away the sound of another gun still nearer the hillside was heard, and this, too, was followed by others at various distances, but each in turn nearer the place where the little American army was lying.

"The signal! They're coming!" said the young lieutenant sharply, as he reached for his sword and then ran swiftly from the place.

"Sounds like it. It does for certain!" muttered the sergeant, as he too grasped his gun and prepared to follow his friend. "Perhaps he won't feel that we're not doing anything now, though for my part I like that better 'n I do the fighting."

Nevertheless the trapper did not delay, but by the time he had arrived at the green he found a surging crowd of unruly and almost unorganized men already there, for the signal was clearly understood by all, and it was known that for miles out from Morristown men had been stationed at regular intervals who were to give knowledge of the approach of the enemy by discharging their rifles.

As Hugh joined the rabble, among which the officers were moving and calling out their

orders, striving to bring some form of order out of the prevailing confusion, he glanced up at the tavern. Behind each window, five of the best marksmen in the army had already taken their stand, prepared to defend the commander and his quarters from any approaching enemy. Almost contemptuously the trapper gazed at these men, whose skill in comparison with his own he was inclined to regard with slight respect.

It was not long before a semblance of order was restored to the surging crowd of men on the green, and there they waited for further news. A half hour elapsed, and still the men stood ready to act at the word of their leaders.

"False alarm. Nobody coming," at last was heard on every side, and soon the assembly dispersed and the men prepared to return to their quarters.

"That's the third inside of a week," said Lieutenant Miner as he joined Hugh on the way back to their hut. "It's becoming monotonous."

"Better so than the other, lad, — I mean Lieutenant," replied the trapper. Henry laughed, and for a time the two walked on in silence. As they came nearer their quarters

suddenly both stopped and listened intently. From the depths of the woods came a scream, shrill, prolonged, weird. The sound was not repeated, though they waited long to hear, and then without a word being spoken, both men turned and plunged into the woods, running swiftly in the direction from which the startling sound had been heard.

CHAPTER II

AN UNWILLING PRISONER

FOR a time the young lieutenant and his companion ran swiftly through the woods, following as nearly as possible the direction from which the startling cry had been heard. The sun was low in the western sky, but the light amidst the trees was still clear and the two men had no difficulty in finding their way.

The silence which had followed the weird sound that had caused them to leave the beaten pathway and dart into the forest had now become almost oppressive. The branches of the tall trees were almost motionless, and the noise of some bird as it darted from bush to tree or from branch to branch, startled by their unexpected approach, was of itself almost a cause of alarm. The very stillness itself was oppressive, and at last the younger man stopped abruptly as he said, "We've come a long way, Hugh, and have n't found anything."

"That's correct, Lieutenant; but it may not mean there is n't anything to be found."

"What shall we do?"

"That's for you to say. You're a lieutenant, lad,—I mean, Lieutenant."

"We have n't found anything."

"So I heard ye remark."

"Perhaps we did n't really hear anything of importance. We were all stirred up over the false alarm and ready to believe every sound we heard was a yell of the redcoats. We might as well go back."

"You're the one to say as to that." But evidently the sergeant was by no means convinced that the search should be abandoned.

"But we have n't found anything wrong, Hugh," persisted the young officer, as if he felt somehow obliged to resist the implied rebuke. "I'm as ready to go on as you are, if you think it's worth while. But I believe't was some bird we heard."

"'Bird!'" retorted Hugh. "'T was a bird, then, what had four legs."

"Four legs? Did n't you think it was a man?"

"No, I did n't."

"What was it, then?"

"That's what we came here to find out. But if you say so, we'll quit and go back to camp. You're the one to give orders."

"I haven't any orders to give. All I wanted was just to find out" —

The young lieutenant paused abruptly as he perceived a sudden change in the manner of his friend. Hugh had bent lower and was peering intently at some object off to his right. As Henry turned and glanced keenly in the same direction, he instantly discovered what it was that had aroused the trapper's interest.

Emerging from a clump of low cedar trees he beheld two men. As they came out into the more open spaces their actions betrayed their fear of discovery, for they glanced about them in all directions before they moved forward, and by every movement betrayed the fear of discovery which apparently possessed them.

Henry Miner had instantly stepped behind a huge tree at the trapper's suggestion, who had himself set the example, and then both peered forth at the two men, who soon began to approach the place where the others were concealed. As they came nearer Henry's interest became keener, for he had recognized one of the men as John Lippard, a careless, worthless young man of about twenty-five years of age, a member of one of the Pennsylvania companies, who had already spent a goodly part of the summer in the guardhouse for

his various acts of disobedience. His companion he could not recognize, but all Henry's interest was quickly drawn to John himself, who was bearing some strange object upon his back. It was evident that both men were engaged in some act which they were desirous of concealing for the caution with which they advanced and the frequent glances they cast about them alike proclaimed their fear of being seen.

It was not until the two men had come within a few yards of the place where Hugh and Henry were concealed that the young lieutenant was able to determine what the strange burden was which John was carrying upon his back. A low exclamation of anger escaped the lieutenant's lips as he at last perceived that John Lippard was bringing a half grown pig, which he had caught and was now carrying on the end of a short club which rested upon his shoulder.

The sight instantly aroused a feeling of anger in the young lieutenant's heart. General Washington had issued the strictest of orders against foraging on the scattered country people by his own soldiers, and already several had felt the power of his anger when his commands had been disobeyed.

Regardless of his companion and with no thought of personal consequences to himself, Henry instantly stepped forth from his hiding place and hailed the men.

“Jack Lippard, what are you doing with that pig?” he demanded.

The unexpected summons for a moment seemed to deprive the foragers of their power of speech. John Lippard’s companion was the first to recover from his surprise, and before any one fully realized what he was about to do, he had turned into the woods and fled swiftly from the spot. If any doubt as to the nature of the action of the men had remained in the lieutenant’s heart, it would have been instantly banished by the flight of the man, which of itself was a conclusive proof of guilt.

John Lippard had swung his burden to the ground, and stood facing Henry and Hugh, for the latter had now advanced and was standing by the young officer’s side. At first he had apparently been overwhelmed by the sudden summons, but in a brief time he had recovered a measure of self-confidence and stood leering at the young officer, although he did not make any attempt to reply to his question.

"What are you doing with that pig?" demanded Henry again.

"I'm not doin' anything. It's there," he replied impudently, pointing as he spoke at the lifeless body at his feet.

"Where did you get it?" said Henry sternly.

"Back here a piece."

"You know what the general's orders are?"

"About what?"

"About foraging."

"He has n't ordered any one not to dicker for a pig, has he?"

"Did you buy that pig?"

"I don't see what you have to say about it, any way." John Lippard was becoming angry and impudent as well.

"You don't answer my question," replied Henry, restraining his own anger by an effort.

"I don't intend to. It's nothing to you any way, and I don't have to tell every little whipper-snapper in camp what I'm doing, — not much, I don't!"

Turning quickly to Hugh, Henry said quietly, "We'll have to tie the fellow's hands behind him. He does n't seem to understand" —

"Now look here, Lieutenant," interrupted

the man quickly. "I did n't just mean what I said. You know how it is, for I suppose you sometimes say more'n ye meant for to say. Hold yer horses a bit, till ye hear what I've got to say."

"What is it?" said Henry quietly. It may have been that his very quietness deceived the man, for assuming a bolder attitude, he advanced a step nearer, and leering as he spoke, said, —

"Now, Lieutenant, half o' that pig's promised to one o' the captains" —

"Which captain?" interrupted Henry sharply.

"That's tellin', an' tellin' is something no one ever yet has accused me of. But it's promised just as I'm tellin' ye; but I'll do the fair thing by you next time, if you'll just shut yer eyes for three minutes."

"What'll you do?"

"I'll bring you half a pig to-morrow night. I know right where they grow, just as thick as blackberries, an' I'll see that you have just as good a porker as this one is. At least, I'll see that you have a good half o' one."

"Do you go out every day?"

"Oh, I'm not tellin' too much, just as I said a minute ago. But there's more'n one o' the

captains an' lieutenants that has had a square meal o' late. He does n't talk too much about it; he's just glad to get a square meal once in a while, an' not too many questions asked either. The rations in the camp don't seem to be over an' above satisfyin'."

"You know about General Washington's order?"

"I heard you speak o' it."

"But you knew about it?"

"Now look here, Lieutenant. Don't ye go for to gettin' too close to that. If I wanted to I could tell ye about some o' the captains that don't seem t' have heard very much about it, or care very much if they have heard. I'm not goin' t' tell, though, for as I said t' ye I'm not much given to that. Now, don't ye go for to settin' yerself up above all the others. Jest ye take a quarter o' this pig, if ye don't feel like waitin' for the one I promised ye for to-morrow, an' there won't be a word said."

For a moment the young lieutenant was silent. In spite of his own rugged honesty, there was a feeling that the man before him was speaking the truth.

Rumors and even reports had come to him, and not infrequently, that certain captains were

in league with their men as to the securing and division of forage and spoils. He had heard that some of the surgeons were accustomed to grant furloughs for the sick or wounded only when they themselves were amply rewarded for the leave of absence given. Indeed, there were tales of corruption among officers and men current, which he had only in part believed or entirely disregarded.

Whatever Henry Miner's own feelings may have been, to-day we know that there was truth in all these reports. Not that all the soldiers were corrupt, or that there were not many true-hearted and patriotic men to be found in every company, but these practices were far more prevalent than they are to-day. The great lesson of it all is that those who cry out against the degeneracy of our own times and laud the glories of a golden age which exists only in their imagination, are surely misinformed. And not the least of the lessons is that the greatness of the great Washington is nowhere more clearly seen than in his dealing with the problems found within the limits of his own camp, problems oftentimes more perplexing and trying than were those presented by the redcoated enemy whose movements he was closely watching.

“Hugh,” said Henry Miner abruptly, “you go back to camp.”

“And what will you be doing, if I may be so bold as to ask?” responded the trapper.

“I’ll take this man to the guardhouse.”

“Better let me do it.”

Before he could reply, John Lippard turned quickly and darted into the woods, running at his utmost speed. But the young lieutenant and his friend instantly started in pursuit. Over the fallen logs, through the tangled bushes they ran in swift pursuit, the light in the forest being somewhat dimmer now and the night fast approaching. Both pursuers were swift runners and were enabled to keep the man they were following in plain sight, and it soon became evident that they were gaining upon him. Nearer and nearer they came, and at last, when they were about to throw themselves upon him, John Lippard threw up both hands and said, —

“I give up, Lieutenant. You’ve got me, and there’s no use in trying to get away.”

“Tie his hands behind him,” said Henry huskily.

“What’ll I tie them with?” inquired the trapper. “I have n’t anything to use.”

“Neither have I,” replied the lieutenant after a hasty search.

“Ye won’t need anything,” said John Lip-
pard. “I’ll go along with you all right.”

As the man was unarmed and Henry had a huge pistol in his belt, the young officer felt that perhaps he was equal to the task of taking the man alone, and so, turning to his friend, he said, “It’ll be all right, Hugh. You go back to camp, and just as soon as I have turned this fellow over to the guard, I’ll come back and join you.”

“Better let me take him, or leastwise go
’long with ye,” suggested Hugh eagerly.

“No ; I’ll go alone.”

The trapper reluctantly turned and retraced his way, soon disappearing among the great trees. As soon as he was gone Henry Miner directed his prisoner to move in front of him, and the march to the guardhouse was at once begun. For a time the two men moved on in silence, the prisoner apparently having no thought of attempting to escape and the young lieutenant watching him continually as they moved through the woods.

“Look here, Henry Miner,” said the prisoner at last, partly turning about.

“Eyes front !” retorted Henry sharply.

Obedying the order, the man kept on his way, but still was not to be diverted from his pur-

pose of speaking. "Now, Henry, you know your folks have always been good to the poor and the unfort'nate. You're not going to be hard with me. I'm a man from your own colony, you know. I won't do this again, — I give you my word I won't."

"Too late now, Jack."

"And you'll turn me over to the guard-house?"

"You're the only one to blame."

"You know what it means; what they'll do to me?"

"You should have thought of that before."

"Henry Miner, if you do that you'll be sorry for it to the day of your death! I'll never let up on ye! I'll get my friends to pay off my score if I can't do it myself. I'll get even with ye if I have to swing for it!"

"'Threatened folks live long,' " responded Henry.

The lights of the camp were now plainly visible, and neither of the men spoke again until they halted before the entrance to the guardhouse, where the captain in charge met them face to face.

CHAPTER III

THE PENALTY

IN a few words the young lieutenant explained the charge against his prisoner, and then, after delivering the man to the officer, at once turned to retrace his way to his own quarters. As he walked rapidly through the camp his thoughts were busied far more with the exciting experiences of the evening than with the sights that greeted him on his way. Groups of soldiers were passed who were noisily singing or laughing loudly over the story of some camp mate. The attack which had been threatened apparently had produced no lasting effect in the army, and the men were for the most part content to enjoy the quiet of the present evening and leave the morrow to care for the things which belonged to itself.

Lieutenant Henry Miner did not stop to listen to any of the noisy soldiers, and in a brief time arrived at the hut which served as his abode. As he approached, the savory odor which saluted him at once reminded him

of the fact that he had not eaten his supper when the alarm had sounded, and his feeling of hunger asserted itself with redoubled force.

"Well, Hugh, you have n't forgotten me," he exclaimed, as he perceived his friend bending low over the fire.

"Why should I, lad, — I mean, Lieutenant?" responded Hugh, as he arose to greet his friend. "I was thinking you'd be back soon."

"Here I am."

"Did you land your man in the guard-house?"

"Of course I did. What did you expect?"

"That's what I expected. Sit right down, Lieutenant, and I'll fix you out in a minute now. I knew ye'd be hungry."

"I am, Hugh, hungry as a bear."

"That's good. I'm ready for ye now."

As Henry at once seated himself before the stand, or small rude table, the sergeant began to serve him. Bringing his long-handled frying pan he lifted a piece of meat on the end of a sharpened stick and placed it before his young friend. The young officer prepared to fall to with a will, but quickly checked himself as he exclaimed, —

"Hugh, where did you get this meat?"

“Why, it’s all right, is n’t it, lad?”

“Where did you get it?” again demanded Henry.

“I’ll tell ye all about it just as soon as ye’ve eaten your supper.”

“You’ll tell me now! Is that the pig Jack Lippard stole?”

“I did n’t want to leave it there. It would spoil, or some one else would get it. We might as well have it as any one. The pig was dead any way.”

Without a word the young lieutenant rose from his seat and began to look about the hut. The elder man watched him for a brief time in silence, and then said, —

“What are you looking for?”

“You know what I’m looking for, Hugh.”

“The pig?”

“What else?”

“Ye won’t find it, lad.”

“Where is it, Hugh?”

“I’ve put it where no one’ll be likely to find it. It’ll keep us going for more’n a week. We’re just so much in, lad.”

“Where is that pig, Hugh?” again demanded the young officer. He was angry now, and his friend no longer pretended to misunderstand him.

"What do you want to do with it?"

"I shall take it to the quartermaster."

"What for? It won't do him any good. There is n't enough of it to help the army any, and it will be a great help to us. It would have spoiled back there where you left it, and I can't see any harm in my bringing it to our camp and cooking it. That's what pigs were made for."

"See here, Hugh," said Henry, speaking quietly as he perceived that his friend's feelings were hurt; "you can understand that it would n't do for me to send a man to the guardhouse for foraging against the special order of the general, and then for me to take what he'd stolen. If there was n't any other reason for my not taking it, that would be enough, and you know it."

"You can eat what I've fried, any way," suggested Hugh. "That won't be of any use to any one else. You might better eat that than just let it go to waste."

"Not a mouthful!" said Henry sharply. "That goes with the other."

"Then I'll take it," said the trapper. "You stay right here. What'll I say to the quartermaster?"

"Tell him just exactly how it was."

"Then he'll shut me up in the guardhouse 'long with Jack Lippard."

"I think not. I'll go with you, though, for fear you might have trouble."

"No, you won't. You're to stay right here. I'll not be gone long."

Quickly darting into the woods at the rear of the hut, the sergeant speedily disappeared from sight, and Henry had no question as to the hiding place of the unfortunate porker.

But Hugh did not return when several minutes had passed, and concluding that the sergeant had doubtless gone on to the quartermaster with his booty, the young lieutenant decided to await the return of his comrade where he was, and make no attempt to join him unless he was delayed in his return.

An hour had elapsed before the sergeant returned, and then in response to the question of his young friend, he said gruffly, "Troubles for your pains. We might jest as well have kept that pig as to have given it up."

"You'll think differently about it in the morning," laughed Henry good-naturedly.

"Humph!" growled Hugh. "All we did was to give up to some other men what we might just as well have kept for ourselves, an' no one'd have been the wiser."

“ You would n’t keep it, any more than I would, Hugh, and you know it, after what I said to you.”

“ I would n’t ? Trust me for that ! ” muttered the sergeant.

But Henry Miner was content and had no desire to continue the conversation. He was thinking far more of John Lippard than of his own loss of the stolen pork. That the man would be severely dealt with he had no doubt, for the orders of Washington had been explicit, and he was convinced that an offense would not lightly be condoned. The thought troubled him, but striving to convince himself that what he had done was his simple duty, he at last sought his bed and strove to banish from his mind the recollection of the distressing event of the day.

On the following morning the young lieutenant was near the centre of the camp, and hearing the sound of drums and fifes on the village green, he turned back to see what the cause of the commotion was. His surprise and consternation were equally great when, as he drew near, he perceived John Lippard with bared back and uplifted hands tied to a post which had been set up on the green. Near him a drummer was standing with a whip of

knotted cords in his hands, and with a sinking of the heart Henry perceived that the wretched man was about to receive his punishment for the offense for which, doubtless, he himself had been the one to arrest him.

In his eagerness he pressed nearer the spot, and as he gazed at the prisoner, John Lippard himself glanced up and recognized him. Such an expression of malignity and hatred he never before had seen on a human countenance, and as he realized that it was all directed against himself he felt sick at heart. A feeling of misgiving swept over him, and he almost wished that he had followed Hugh's advice and permitted the man to go unmolested.

And yet he had done right, and only what he had promised to do, he assured himself. The warning words of the commander had been known by John, and he had gone directly against the most explicit orders when he had ventured to continue his marauding. No; the consequences were of John Lippard's own seeking, and he was as much an instrument as was the knotted whip in the hands of the burly drummer. If the man had heeded the words of the general there would have been no trouble, and the leader was determined to stamp out all lawlessness among his men, —

of that Henry Miner was fully assured. John Lippard's blood was upon his own head, and he had no one to blame for his downfall but himself.

Although the thought was somewhat reassuring, nevertheless Henry deeply pitied the unfortunate man before him. The sight of his punishment was more than he was able to bear, and as he heard the word given and saw the drummer quickly raise the whip in his hands, he turned away from the spot. He heard the lash as it hissed and fell on the bared back, but no groan or cry escaped the lips of the sufferer. The sound caused Henry to quicken his steps, and soon he had passed beyond the sight of the morbid crowd which had assembled to witness the punishment.

The recollection of the sight, however, was with the young officer all the day, and even when he returned to his quarters the tale which Hugh had to relate to him only served in part to divert his mind.

"I've heard something to-day, lad, — I mean Lieutenant, — and I'd like to have your opinion on it," Hugh was saying.

"Have you? What is it?" Henry replied, only slightly interested in what the trapper was saying.

"Did ye ever hear o' Simon Safford?"

"I never did. Who is he?"

"He b'longs to one o' the Connecticut companies. They do say as how he's in league with the evil one," suggested Hugh, his voice becoming lower.

"Do they? I'm afraid he's not the only one in the camp." Henry was still thinking of John Lippard and the sight he had so recently seen.

"Yes, sir," continued Hugh, unmindful and perhaps unaware of the lack of interest on Henry's part in the story he was telling. "He has had some o' the strangest doin's ye ever heard tell of. Last night he took four men an' went down in the swamp, an' what d'ye 'spose they saw there?"

"I have n't the slightest idea. Perhaps it was the mud; there's plenty of it there."

"He'd told 'em what he'd seen there," continued Hugh, disregarding Henry's flippant reply, "an' there was n't a man that would believe him. So last night four men went along with him, an' they found it true, every word o' it, just as he'd told 'em."

"What was true?"

"About what they'd see there. It was n't so very dark last night, as you may happen t'

recollect, and Simon Safford he led 'em along a path he seemed to know all right enough, a path that took 'em straight into the swamp. When they 'd gone 'bout a quarter o' a mile into the swamp, Simon Safford stopped an' told 'em to wait an' pretty soon they 'd see just what he 'd seen there for three nights runnin'."

"Well, did they see it?" demanded Henry, becoming more interested.

"They did that, lad — I mean Lieutenant," replied Hugh, his voice becoming lower and more impressive as he spoke. "They saw just exactly what Simon Safford had seen an' told 'em about."

"Well, what was it they saw? You don't tell me."

"I'll tell ye just what these four men told me. When they got in there it was darker 'n it was outside and the frogs were making such a racket you could hear them half a mile off. Simon Safford had said that he 'd seen, on every one o' the three nights he 'd been there alone, three lights start up all at once and burn for about two minutes an' then go out."

"What of it? Where were these lights?"

"Right there in the swamp, not more 'n a dozen yards from where the men were stand-

ing. But the strangest part o' it all was the color."

"The color of what? Of the lights?"

"Yes, that's it, that's it. They were a sort o' a purplish-green yellow, and you could just smell the brimstone. That's what every man said."

"And so you think Simon Safford is in league with the devil, do you?"

"H'sh! I didn't say just that," replied Hugh hastily in a whisper. "But every one o' the four men says he thinks Simon knows more 'n is good for some folks to know. Indeed, they're sure o' it."

"What does he know?"

"Simon says he knows there's money buried in the swamp right there."

"And so he wants the others to know it too, does he?"

"He does n't *want* 'em to know, but he can't help himself. He says there's got to be ten half joes planted there an' then he can find the chest. He says the money that's hidden there is in a small iron chest."

"If you put your half joes there and help him find the chest, then he'll divide with you — is that it?"

"Yes, that's it," said Hugh eagerly.



IT WAS JOHN LIPPARD . . . HIS EYES BURNING WITH ANGER

“Who told you that you could come in, — these men or Simon?”

“Why, the men; but Simon told ’em they could tell me, though he did n’t just want ’em to. He ’d rather keep it” —

Hugh stopped abruptly, as he glanced up and beheld a man standing before him. It was John Lippard, his face bearing ample evidence of the suffering he had endured, and his eyes burning with anger as he looked steadily at the young lieutenant. In his outstretched fingers was a flattened bullet, which he evidently desired Henry to see, but for a brief time all three men were silent.

CHAPTER IV

CAPTAIN MARTIN'S VISIT

THE soldier was the first to break in upon the awkward silence. Not once had he turned away his gaze from the young lieutenant, who was somewhat embarrassed by the evident suffering and no less evident anger of the man before him.

"I have you to thank for that," said John Lippard, as he pointed at the flattened bullet in his hand.

"I don't see just how," replied Henry gently.

"Do you see those marks on it?"

"Yes."

"They're where I bit it."

"'Bit it'? I don't see how I had anything to do with your biting it."

"Well, ye might have seen if ye'd stood where I was this morning. And you know where that was, for I see ye when they tied me up to the post."

"Yes, I saw you there, and I was sorry" —

“‘Sorry’!” exclaimed John Lippard bitterly. “Sorry! Yes, ye were almost so sorry ye just turned away, and I see ye when ye turned away with that sneer on your face. I shan’t forget it!”

“Jack, I did n’t have any such feeling; honestly, I did n’t. I was sorry for you. I’d have taken your place if I could have done it.”

“Ye were n’t so sorry that ye did n’t hand me over to the guard.”

“I could n’t help that. Why was it that I did it?”

“That’s more’n I can say; and if you can’t tell, I’m thinkin’ there is n’t any one in the army who’d be likely to give you the information. You can say what you want to, you were the only one that knew about the porker, and if you had kept still there would n’t have been any trouble.” The soldier spoke bitterly and his anger was apparent in the very tones of his voice.

“I could n’t help that, Jack; you know I could n’t. Besides, I was not to blame. If you had n’t gone straight against the general’s orders you know there would n’t have been any trouble for you or any one else. There was n’t anything for me to do except just what I did.”

"Ye might 'a' took the pig an' said nothing."

The young lieutenant made no reply.

"That would 'a' been no more 'n lots o' the officers have been a doin', an' you know it, too!"

"I did only what I had promised to do."

"Ye see that bullet?" demanded John Lippard sharply.

"Yes, I see it."

"Those marks are where I bit it. When they tied me up to the post and the drummer began to count out his forty lashes, I just bit onto the bullet, an' the harder he hit the harder I bit. I never cried out once, and there is n't one o' 'em who can say he saw me shed a tear or cry a cry! No, sir, not one!"

"It's all done now, Jack," said Henry sympathetically, for he was strongly moved by the evident suffering of the man and the story of his silent endurance of his punishment. "It won't happen again, I'm certain."

"No, it won't happen again, I'll vouch for that," laughed John Lippard bitterly; "but it won't be your fault if it does n't, though. I can tell ye that!"

"There won't be any trouble if you live up to the regulations of the camp, Jack."

The soldier's face flushed with anger, and with blazing eyes he turned upon the young officer, and, his voice rising as he spoke, said: "I can tell you one thing, you little upstart! You'll have a taste o' that whip yourself before you're many days older, or my name's not Jack Lippard! I've got my friends just the same's you've got yours, an' all I've got t' say is that your time is comin'! I shan't go away, either, when I see you tied up t' the post. I'll stand right by, an' if they'll let me, I'll take the whip out o' the drummer's hands an' I'll show ye just how good 'tis for a man to have a taste o' the lash. Ye'll want more'n one bullet for to chew on, too, an' I'll give ye fair warnin' o' that! A whole pouch full won't be any too many! I'm goin'!"—

"Jack Lippard, you stop right where you are!" The young officer was speaking in a low voice, but his bearing and manner for a moment impressed the maddened man before him. In a brief time, however, the soldier apparently recovered from his feeling of surprise, and with increasing rage broke forth again, —

"Oh, it's all easy enough for you t' talk! You're a lieutenant, you are, an' I'm only like the dirt under your feet, just fit to be

tramped on. But let me tell you, you little upstart, there is n't any boy in the whole beggarly army Washington's hiding here in Morristown who is going to serve me as you did, an' not pay for it. What is his army, anyhow? A lot o' infants for officers an' for men, who are n't fit to touch with a ten-foot pole. There's more things goin' on, let me tell you, my little man, than you or any o' your crowd knows. I"—

"Jack, the next time it may not be the lash, but the gauntlet."¹

"That's right! Keep it a-goin'! I'm down, so kick me again! Maybe General Washington'll hear of it, and he'll make a captain o' ye."

"I don't want to make any more trouble for you, Jack," said Henry, now greatly aroused by the abuse of the man, "but if you don't go, and go now, I'll see that you are taken straight back to the guardhouse."

¹ Among the punishments which the unruly soldiers at Morristown were compelled to undergo, "running of the gauntlet" was almost as common as the whipping-post. The culprit was compelled to run between the two lines of soldiers, and receive, as he passed, the blows which they inflicted with clubs, whips, etc. The bayonet also was used if the man would not run, and if he ran too fast his speed was checked by the same instrument, which in that case would be held in front of him.

The man laughed defiantly, yet his tone and manner instantly changed. "Oh, I'm goin'. I've said 'bout all I care t' say. Ye won't forget it, will ye?"

"I'll give you just one minute to leave this place."

"That's kind o' ye," retorted John Lippard impudently. "But I was goin' now, any way. I'm not so fond o' yer company as to want to stay any longer 'n I have to. But I'll see ye again, and then maybe ye'll sing another tune. Oh, yes, we'll meet again," he added, laughing boisterously, as he abruptly turned away and at once departed from the place.

For a long time after his departure, young Henry Miner remained in the place where he had been seated, thinking over the interview which had been held, and he was seriously troubled and perplexed by it. The threats of the man did not greatly concern him, but he had known John, or "Jack," Lippard for years before the outbreak of the Revolution. He was a ne'er-do-well, who was looked upon by the simple Pennsylvania people of the region where Henry had his home as a shiftless, lazy fellow, but no one feared him or thought of him as dangerous. That he had

greatly changed after he had entered the army was only too apparent. That he should have been the one to arrest him and report him for a serious breach of the rules of the camp, was certainly a matter of regret, but the longer he thought over the matter the more clearly was Henry convinced that, although it was unfortunate, still he had done only what it was his duty to do. Again and again he assured himself that, under similar circumstances, he would do the same thing again. The fault was all Jack's, and if he did not want the punishment, which certainly was severe, then the one thing for him to do was to avoid the cause of it. The lash, like the law, was designed for the disobedient only, and every man who was orderly and well-behaved had nothing to fear from either.

Nevertheless, as he continued to be seriously troubled by the thought of the suffering he had brought upon his acquaintance, he resolved on the following day to seek him out and endeavor to explain matters more fully to him. He assured himself that he had no fear of the threats which had been made; but the man felt that he had been dealt with with undue severity, and that, as well as the fact that he was from the same colony and from

the same part of the colony from which he himself had come, were sufficient of themselves to induce him to attempt, at least, to restore the former good feeling which had existed between them.

Accordingly, on the afternoon of the day following that in which the interview had occurred, the young lieutenant sought out the quarters occupied by the company of which John Lippard was a member. He had no difficulty in finding the hut which the man with several others had occupied, and as he approached he beheld several men seated or lying on the ground in front of it.

He perceived as he drew near that he was at once recognized by the men, and he also was quickly aware that his presence was not welcome, for he was greeted with surly looks, and not one rose to respond to his greeting. He was speedily aware that the man whom he was seeking was not there, and stopping before the group, he said quietly, —

“I am looking for Jack Lippard.”

His announcement was evidently not altogether pleasing, and no one responded.

“Is he here?” continued Henry.

“I don’t see him,” said one of the men, and a laugh greeted his words.

"Where can I find him?" continued the young lieutenant, pretending to ignore the discourtesy of the men.

"Can't say," said the one who had spoken before, and again there was a low laugh from his companions.

The face of the young officer flushed, but he was determined to find his man if it was possible, and so he still disregarded the rudeness of the soldiers.

"Has he been gone long?" inquired Henry.

"Have n't seen him since his dose yesterday."

"Have any of you seen him?" demanded Henry.

The men all shook their heads, but no one replied to the question.

"Will you kindly tell him that I came to see him," said Henry, as he turned away.

"We'll tell him fast enough," retorted one of the men, to the evident amusement of his companions, who all laughed loudly at his words.

Chagrined as well as somewhat angered at his reception, the young lieutenant at once departed, but it was near nightfall when at last he returned to his own quarters. Not a

word had he been able to hear of John Lippard or his whereabouts, and he was seriously perplexed when he seated himself before the table which the sergeant had spread for him.

So busied was he with his own thoughts that he failed to mark the air of abstraction which seemed to possess Hugh. The trapper was unusually silent, and if Henry had been ordinarily attentive he would have perceived that his friend was frequently gazing at him with an expression on his face that was entirely new. However, Henry Miner failed to observe any of these things, and even when, soon after dark, Hugh slipped out of the hut and, without a word of explanation, hastily started for the woods in the rear of the rude little building, not even his departure was noted by the troubled young officer.

It was several hours later when the trapper crept stealthily back to the building. The stars were all shining brightly in the heavens, the shadows of the tall trees were motionless, and even the noisy tree-toads had ended their evening chorus. A silence deep and intense rested over the entire hillside, and Sergeant Hugh evidently was not displeased, for, pausing before the hut, he listened intently for a brief time before he entered. Appar-

ently satisfied that his coming had not been heard, he at last cautiously crept inside and soon was stretched upon his bunk without having aroused his young friend, who was peacefully sleeping in the same room.

Several times on the following morning the trapper evidently was minded to speak to Henry concerning some matter which plainly was of deep concern to him. Indeed, at one time he said, "That was all true, lad — I mean Lieutenant."

"Was it?" inquired Henry absently.

The reply was not encouraging and the conversation abruptly ceased, nor was it renewed during the day. Indeed, Hugh was absent from the place much more than was his custom or duty demanded, but he made no explanation when he returned, apparently well content that his young comrade did not inquire as to the cause of his absence.

It was late in the afternoon and Hugh had not returned, when one of Anthony Wayne's captains came to the hut and apparently was rejoiced to find the young lieutenant there alone.

"I'm glad to find you here, Henry," said Captain Martin, abandoning all formality and cordially grasping his friend by the hand,

for he, too, was one of those who had come from the region where Henry Miner had dwelt, and although he was a few years older than the lieutenant, they had nevertheless been good friends in the peaceful days that had preceded the outbreak of the struggle for independence.

"And I'm just as glad to see you," responded Henry.

"Have you heard from home of late?"

"Three weeks ago."

"That's since I've heard. I'll listen to the news, if you please."

For a time the two young men exchanged what they had heard, and then Henry related the story of his arrest of John Lippard and the punishment that had followed. He made no reference, however, to the threats of the man, or to the efforts he himself had made to see him. All that belonged to no one but himself.

The young captain listened, evidently deeply interested, and when Henry's story was ended, he said gently, "I fancy you know it's reported that Jack Lippard has deserted."

"Deserted! No, I have n't heard a word of it," replied Henry quietly.

"He has, and is gone for good and all, I

hear, or rather, I hope. We're better off without such fellows than with them. It may be, though, we'll find him again, and before we expect it, for I've come to see you concerning a matter that would just suit him."

For an hour the two young men were engaged in a low and earnest conversation, and when at last the captain departed, the young lieutenant, excited and eager, at once began his preparations to carry out the proposal they had agreed upon.

CHAPTER V

INTO THE SWAMP

IN the interview which Henry Miner had with his friend Captain Martin, the latter had explained the purpose of his visit, and also set forth certain problems which at the time were sorely perplexing to the younger officers. It appeared that the escapade of John Lippard was not an exceptional case, but that the practice of foraging upon the scattered people of the region was all too common. Indeed, so much had the country people suffered at the hands of the soldiers that many complaints had been made to the great commander, and his strict and apparently harsh orders had been made for a dual purpose. He had been desirous of retaining the friendship of the people of the region, some of whom were wavering in their allegiance because of the numerous "proclamations" which the British leaders had caused to be circulated in the region, calling upon all men to renew their loyalty to King George, and promising for-

givenness for all past offenses if the promise of return was speedily made. In addition, there was also his desire and determination to protect the people from the lawless elements in his army, as well as to save the army itself from the evil effects of raiding upon the community.

Washington's orders had served to check the evil, but not even the fear in which nearly all his men stood of him could entirely banish the custom from the camp. Supplies were uncertain and scant, and the prospect of increased provisions not even the leaders could hold forth with any certainty. Under the incentive of hunger some of the men were willing even to brave the effect of his anger and chance the almost certain penalty which would follow the detection of their disobedience, and foraging and marauding did not entirely cease.

All this Captain Martin had explained to Henry Miner, but he had also related to him the discovery which had been made that lawless men who belonged to neither army had taken advantage of the troublous times to rob the defenseless people, assured that their deeds would be attributed to the soldiers and that they themselves would escape detection.

The actions of these robbers had increased the desire of the commander to put an end to all the depredations, and he had therefore called upon some of his younger officers to assist in the seizing of these men.

One of the worst of the leaders of these lawless bands of desperadoes had been tracked that very day to a swamp that lay in the rear of the army, behind the hills, and it was planned that very night to capture him. It was with this purpose in his mind that Captain Martin had visited Henry Miner on the evening to which reference has been made, and the result of the conference was that at about nine o'clock the young lieutenant, with six carefully selected men, had departed from the camp, and, cautiously making their way to the place on the border of the swamp that had been agreed upon, were to follow the directions of the guide who had been assigned to them and proceed, as he might lead them, to the spot where it was reported the outlaw was to be found. At the same time the captain was to lead another little band toward the same place from another direction, while still two other little forces were to penetrate the swamp from different points which had been assigned them. In this manner it was confi-

dently believed that any flight of the desperado would be cut off and at the same time his certain capture would be accomplished.

Before the young lieutenant and his followers had set forth on their expedition, he had made a careful search for Hugh, whose presence and aid he relied much upon in such trying experiences as that upon which they were about to enter. But to his surprise, Henry was unable to find the trapper, though he continued his search and delayed his departure until the very time which had been agreed upon had arrived. Puzzled, as well as troubled, by the unexpected disappearance of the faithful man, Henry had not delayed longer, and at his word at last the little band departed from the camp.

The outermost sentries had been passed, the hills had been climbed, and they had arrived at the place where it had been understood the guide who was to lead them into the swamp was to make his appearance. There the party halted, while Henry advanced in the darkness alone to find the man.

He had gone but a short distance before he was startled by the sudden appearance of a huge form that seemed unnaturally large as it loomed up in the dim light before him.

Surprised by the sudden apparition, Henry grasped his pistol, and for a moment stood waiting for the man to speak.

“Heah I is, sah.”

The man evidently was a negro, and this was according to the plan which had been outlined.

“Who are you?” demanded the young officer in a low voice.

“Yaas, sah. It’s Moses, sah. Dat’s who I is, sah.”

“What are you doing here?” inquired the young lieutenant.

“I reck’n I is waitin’ for you, sah. Dat’s what Cap’n Martin done tell me.”

“Did the captain tell you who it was you were to meet here?”

“Yaas, sah. He done say ’t was a boy, sah, what I was to say to as how de cap’n done tell me for to tek him into de swamp, sah.”

“It’s all right, Moses,” replied Henry, rejoicing that the darkness concealed the flush which had crept over his cheeks at the words of the negro. “You stay right here where you are, and I’ll bring up the men.”

In a brief time the men advanced to the place where the negro was waiting, and the young lieutenant prepared to enter the swamp

which he could see in the distance before him. Apparently it spread out over many acres, for he could not make out the boundaries save as they were directly before him. He was able to perceive that there were many clumps of low bushes and an occasional high tree that could be seen in the morass. Certainly it was an ideal hiding-place for any man, both because of its own soil and the peril it would provide for those who attempted to penetrate it in the darkness or without knowledge of its dangerous places.

Desirous of asserting his authority and impressing the guide, as well as because of the fears which the dim outlines of the great swamp suggested, Henry turned to the man and said, "You black rascal, you know your way here, do you?"

"Yaas, sah."

"And you know what you're here for, do you?"

"Yaas, sah."

"If he makes a motion that's wrong," said the young lieutenant, turning to his followers, "you know what you're to do. Shoot him before you fire at anything else; that is, if he shows any signs of treachery. Now then, go ahead!" he added, speaking to the black

man, who had been silent during the conversation.

Quickly the guide turned and plunged boldly into the swamp, all six men in single file following the young lieutenant, who kept close behind the black man. The pathway which the negro was following was soft in places, but was not difficult to trace in the dim light, although the party was frequently compelled to leap from hummock to hummock in order to obtain a substantial foothold. The pace at which Moses led the way was swift, and apparently he was so confident of his directions that he gave no heed to the men behind him, evidently expecting them to do their own part in keeping up with him. There was a crescent moon in the sky, but its light was partly obscured by the clouds that were moving across its face. There was a weirdness even in the low bushes and occasional trees; and the leap of some startled frog, as, frightened by the approaching men, it plunged into the waters, was at first somewhat disconcerting. Even the young lieutenant, who was bravely striving to keep up a show of courage, found that his own heart was beating much more rapidly than its wont, and that every sense was keenly alert.

But the men held steadily to the way, and when at last what seemed to Henry a long time had elapsed since they had entered the swamp, he spoke in a low voice to the guide and ordered him to halt.

"Where are you going, Moses?" he demanded in a low voice.

"Yaas, sah. Yaas, sah, dat 's des' what I is a doin', sah."

"Doing what?"

"Yaas, sah. I is takin' yo' to de place."

"You 're sure this is the way?"

"Yaas, sah! Yaas, sah!"

"How much farther is it?"

"Des a little way, sah. Des a little way."

"How far? Ten minutes more?"

"Yaas, sah."

"Is it more than ten minutes to the place?"

"Yaas, sah."

"What do you mean? Tell me exactly how much farther we have to go."

"Yaas, sah. Yaas, sah. I done tell yo' when we gets there."

"Tell me now!" demanded Henry sternly.

"Yaas, sah. Yaas, sah. It's des a little way."

"Go ahead, Moses," said the young officer

at last, hopeless of obtaining any definite information from his guide. "You understand what is to happen to you if you try to play us false," he added warningly.

Without any further delay the advance was resumed, but a more careful watch was maintained now, not only for signs of danger about them but also upon the black guide, of whom Henry had come to entertain strong suspicions. The men kept more nearly together, although the line of march was not changed, and the silence of the entire party was of itself somewhat ominous.

Steadily they moved forward, and it seemed to the young lieutenant that miles lay between them and the border of the swamp from which they had started. Yet Moses still gave no indication that he was near the place to which he was to conduct them. The chorus of the frogs in the distance sounded dim and indistinct now, and the stillness of the swamp became more and more oppressive. Henry was beginning to feel that the advance was becoming wellnigh unbearable. Invisible forms seemed to be darting from bush to bush, and when occasionally a low hanging branch of bush or tree brushed his arm he could scarcely repress the cry that rose to his lips, so like

the clutch of some unseen hand did the contact appear to be.

Apparently his companions were also affected by similar feelings, and the air of something impending seemed to be evident in the entire party. The suspense was becoming almost beyond the power of the young officer to bear, and he was about to halt the party again and demand of Moses a direct reply to the questions in his mind, when suddenly he was aware that they had come to a small circular island that was firm beneath their feet. He could see that bushes were growing around its shore and that several tall trees shot up from the centre of the island itself.

Here Moses, of his own free will, halted and in a whisper bade all the members of the party to come near him. Silently all obeyed, and when they were gathered about him the black man in a low voice said, "Here we is."

"Where?" whispered Henry eagerly.

"Here, sah. Yaas, sah. Here we is."

"But there's nobody here, Moses."

"Yaas, sah. Yaas, sah. Dat's so. But ober dere is de place," and as Moses spoke he pointed toward a low island which could be seen not more than twenty yards away.

"Is that where he is?" demanded Henry.

“Yaas, sah. Dat’s de bery place.”

“We can’t go there without being seen. Is there a path?”

“Yaas, sah. I kin show yo’ de way.”

“Are there paths coming up to it on the other sides?”

“Dey is, fer sho.”

“And that’s where the other parties will come?”

“Yaas, sah.”

“Then all we can do now is to wait for the signal, though it may be that the others are already here and are waiting for us,” said Henry thoughtfully, almost as if he were speaking to himself and was unaware of the presence of the black man. Turning to his followers, he said, “We’ll have to wait here, men. We can’t do anything until the signal” —

Abruptly the young lieutenant ceased and gazed almost in terror at the sight that appeared before them. From the borders of the little island there shot up blazing fires that were almost dazzling in their brilliancy. A cloud of smoke filled the air and the odor of the fires was wellnigh overpowering. The flames apparently were of many and varied hues, but the most startling part of all was the vision of

the body of a man hanging by the neck from the limb of a near-by tree. Even the gruesome sight seemed to share in the weird light, and for an instant it seemed to Henry that he could see flames darting from the mouth and nostrils of the body. In another instant the fires died away almost as suddenly as they had appeared, and the darkness had returned with redoubled force.

With a yell that might have been heard a quarter of a mile away, Moses leaped from the island and started swiftly on his way back over the pathway by which they had come, and he was quickly followed by all the men save Henry. Even the young officer was sorely tempted to follow their example, but he grimly stood his ground, determined not to flee, even if he should find himself in the very midst of the powers of darkness.

CHAPTER VI

A PERPLEXING CAPTURE

IN a brief time Henry Miner discovered that he had been left alone in the darkness. The silence that now returned seemed to him to be doubly oppressive. Not a trace of the sudden blaze remained, and had it not been for the penetrating odor that still filled the air he would almost have been tempted to believe that what he had seen and heard had been the effect of a dream.

The fact, however, that he was where he was and was alone, was something which could not be disputed, and he resolutely endeavored to think over what his next move should be. He had come with a definite purpose in his mind, and although he had been deserted by his comrades, and even the negro guide had fled with a yell that yet seemed to be sounding in his ears, he was determined that come what might he would still strive to be true to his trust. Moses had declared that the island where the marauder was to be

found was near, and it required but a brief thought to convince him that the other parties that were coming on an errand similar to his own could not be far away, and that help, if it should be required, was nearer than it could be if he should attempt to retrace his way by the uncertain pathway to the shore of the swamp.

All these thoughts had flashed through his mind in a brief time, and as soon as he had arrived at the decision which has been indicated, he turned sharply about and started toward the opposite side of the island. Puzzled as he was and startled by the weird appearance of the fires and the swaying body, nevertheless, Henry Miner had no great fear of any supernatural manifestation, such as had evidently been uppermost in the minds of his terror-stricken comrades. That the sight he had seen was strange, perhaps almost unaccountable, he readily acknowledged to himself; but in no wise deterred by the fact and in far greater fear of enemies of flesh and blood than of any uncanny foes, he began to move cautiously across the island. He had advanced but a few steps when he was again startled by the sight of two men who suddenly rose from behind the bushes and,

leaping into what seemed to be the depths of the swamp, began to move swiftly in the direction of the island where Moses had declared the outlaw would be found. Breathless with surprise Henry instantly stopped and watched the men, who apparently were in greater fear of him than he was of them. He instantly concluded that they must be following some path which he himself was unable to discover, perhaps the very one to which the black guide had referred, for no man could move with the swiftness with which these two men were leaping and running unless there was some firm ground beneath their feet. But thoughts of this were speedily banished as he was convinced that he recognized both men in the dim light. Certainly one very strongly resembled Hugh, the trapper, and the other was very like John Lippard, whom he himself had arrested two nights before this time. What their presence here might indicate he was not able to declare even to himself; but as the men could be seen now just about to leap upon the shore of the adjacent island, he quickly roused himself and shouted.

“Hugh! Hugh!” he called, “Come back here! Stop! Stop!”

No response was given his hail, and appar-

ently it served only to cause the men to quicken their movements, for both with redoubled efforts plunged into the bushes that were near the shore and speedily disappeared from sight.

For a moment Henry stood gazing at the spot where they had entered, but as neither reappeared he did not repeat his hail, and at last turned about to see if any more men remained upon the island where he was.

Trembling with excitement, he moved cautiously along the shore, his pistol held tightly in his hand, and ready for any new event that might occur. Nothing rewarded his search, however, and when he had completed the circuit, he was convinced that he was indeed alone upon the island.

The unaccountable discovery that Hugh, of all men, had been there, and without doubt had had a part in the strange happenings, was as puzzling as it was disconcerting. Upon Hugh's faithfulness the young lieutenant would readily have trusted his own life, and now to find the trapper in the place where a hunted outlaw was hiding was almost beyond his power of belief. And yet that it had been Hugh whom he had seen he was convinced, although he was not equally positive

that the other man had been John Lippard. But he at least strongly resembled him, and in Henry's mind there was not so much doubt as fear that his suspicion had been correct. And to find Hugh in his company, and at such an hour and in such a place, was the most disheartening and disconcerting part of it all.

The two men had gone, however, and were not likely to return, and his own immediate action now became the supremely important problem in the young officer's mind. He had come with definite instructions and with clearly defined orders, and to him it seemed that there was nothing to be attempted until at least he had done his utmost to comply with them. He would remain where he was until the signal which had been agreed upon had been heard, and after that his course must be determined by the results of the attempt which he had no doubt would at least be made. There was nothing for him to do for the present except to remain where he was and await the signal.

Withdrawing into a sheltered spot he seated himself with his back against a tree and prepared to wait with such patience as he was able to command. He had not been seated long, however, before the weird cry which had

been agreed upon as the signal for the advance of all four parties, broke in upon the stillness of the night.

Instantly aroused by the sound, Henry leaped to his feet and ran hastily to the shore where he had seen the two men depart when they had so hastily quitted the island. About three feet out from the shore he perceived a small circular spot of what appeared to be solid ground, and at about the same distance beyond it was another. Farther than that he was unable to see, but the fact that the two men had departed by this way convinced him that this must be the path to the other island of which Moses had spoken, and he instantly resolved to make the attempt to follow it, although he was able to see that thick and doubtless deep soft mud was all about the firmer places. To miss his footing and fall was likely to plunge him into depths that might draw him down and even swallow him up, but there was no time for fears or forebodings now. The signal had been given and his part was to respond.

Without hesitating a moment he leaped upon the nearest hummock and found the ground firm beneath his feet. He prepared for his second jump, but before he leaped

his ears were saluted by shouts and the sounds of shots that came from the little island before him. For a moment he hesitated, listening for the sounds to be repeated, but the one loud outburst was all that he heard. As he made ready to leap again, he suddenly stopped, as he beheld the forms of two men running along the shore of the island. In a moment they arrived at a place in front of him, and without hesitating a moment leaped upon some unseen place and apparently were coming directly toward him. Startled by the sight, and realizing that if he advanced and the men kept on their way they must meet, and that it would be impossible for any to pass, he suddenly lifted up his voice and shouted:—

“Come on, boys! Here are two of them coming straight toward us! We’ll get ’em now! Fire if they try to get away! Come on, the whole six of you! We’ll have both of them! They can’t get away!”

Whether it was the stentorian nature of his call, or the fact that the two men believed that he really was calling upon men behind him to follow him, will never be known. At all events, his device succeeded, and both men instantly turned back on their way, one of them in his desperation slipping and falling

from the mound upon which he had leaped into the very depths of the mud about him. Nor did his companion stay to assist him, for he quickly regained the shore, and darting into the bushes, speedily disappeared from sight.

There was no hesitation on Henry's part now, and exerting all his strength he leaped from hummock to hummock and from mound to mound, and just as he gained the shore he saw the wretched man who had fallen into the mud crawling up before him.

Instantly seizing him by the collar, Henry shouted, "Surrender! You're my prisoner! I have you now, and there's no use in your trying to get away."

Apparently the man was of the same mind, and even in the dim light Henry could see that he presented a most woebegone appearance. Even his head and face, as well as his body, were covered with the filth of the swamp, and his nearest friend would have failed to recognize him in his plight. He made no attempt to escape, and although the young officer realized that he had the man in his power, he hardly knew what to do with him now that he had secured him. Not a sound could be heard on the island, and the very

silence itself increased the perplexity of the young officer.

Suddenly, however, Henry heard the sound of the rush of several men toward him, and in a moment he beheld three men running swiftly to the spot where he was standing. In advance was one whom he speedily recognized as Captain Martin, and with a great sense of relief he called, "Here he is, Captain."

"Who are you?" demanded the captain as he approached and peered into the face before him. "Bless me! It's Henry," he hastily added. "What have you got here?"

"I caught this man just as he was crawling up on the shore."

"Who is he? Never mind, now! You hang on to your man. He's the only one we've caught. Scatter, men!" he added, turning to the others. "Where there's one there must be more!"

All the men instantly responded, and Henry was left alone with his prisoner.

"Who are you?" he inquired of the man, still keeping a firm grip upon his collar.

But the prisoner evidently was not minded to enter into conversation with his captor, and though he was a much larger man than the young lieutenant, he made no attempt to break

away from him. Nor did Henry move from the place where he had been standing, fearful that his man might escape, or that his own friends might not know where to look for him.

More than a half hour had elapsed before Captain Martin came back, and as he drew near he said, "You didn't let him get away, I see."

"No, sir."

"I should have left some one with you to guard him, but the truth is, that I needed every man I had; and this is the only one we have to show for our night's work," he added, pointing to the prisoner as he spoke.

"Where are all your men? I haven't seen any of them," he suddenly inquired.

"Gone, every one of them," replied Henry, and in a few words he related the story of what had occurred on the other island.

"'T was strange," assented the captain; "I think we'd better go over there and search the place."

"I've done that already," said Henry.

"No harm in trying again. It beats all, what's become of the rascals. Some of them were here, I know."

"So do I. I saw two of them."

“Perhaps this fellow can tell us something about it,” said the captain, turning to the prisoner. But the man was as silent to all his questions as previously he had been to Henry’s.

“Very well; that’s all right. We’ll leave him here for some of the men to get the mud off, while you and I’ll take three or four fellows and go back to that other island. You can show the way, can’t you?”

“I will do my best.”

The prisoner was turned over to the men, and the captain and Henry at once, with three others, departed for the island where the sight had been seen that had sent all the young lieutenant’s party in such haste away. The island was reached in safety, but a most careful search failed to reveal any traces of the presence of any one except themselves.

“Where’s that body that was hanging from the tree you told about, Henry?” inquired the captain.

“I’ll show you,” replied Henry quickly, at once leading the way to the spot where the gruesome sight had been seen.

But when they arrived not a trace of it was to be found.

Puzzled and startled by the strange disappearance, Henry could feel almost instinctively

that his story was doubted, and he became the more eager to prove what he had said.

But his search proved unavailing, and at last the captain said, "We're going back now, Lieutenant. Will you go with us or by the way you came?"

"By the way I came," replied Henry.

And soon he had departed from the island alone and was leaping from point to point, as he retraced his way to the shore of the great swamp.

CHAPTER VII

THREE PUZZLING INTERVIEWS

THE young lieutenant's first act after his return to his own quarters was to approach the bunk which the trapper usually occupied. To his consternation he perceived that Hugh himself was lying there and to all appearances was sleeping as quietly as a wearied child.

For a brief time Henry stood looking down upon the man, almost unable to trust the evidence of his own senses. It was incredible that the sergeant should have escaped from the island in the swamp and returned to the camp before he himself had arrived, for Henry had made haste in all the journey, eager as he was to be in the hut before his friend should arrive, and be able to demand sternly from him the meaning of his part in the exciting experiences of the night. And now to find the man already here, and apparently having been in his bunk for a long time, was puzzling and confusing.

There was one way by which the mystery might be solved, and Henry quickly decided to test it. Seizing Hugh roughly by the shoulder, he shook him until at last the trapper opened his eyes and stared stupidly at the young officer, who could be seen in the dim light standing by his bedside.

"W-what is it? Wha-at's wrong, my lad—I mean Lieutenant?" he demanded stupidly.

"What are you doing here, Hugh?" inquired Henry, sharply.

"Doing here?" responded Hugh. "Doing here? Where should I be, lad?"

"How long have you been here?"

"How long? Why, I've been asleep, lad. What time is it?"

"How long have you been here?" Henry once more demanded.

"Ever since I turned in."

"When was that?"

"Last night — to-night — just now — not long ago."

"Where have you been, Hugh?"

"Where should I be? You found me here, didn't you?" There was a note of protest or fear in Hugh's voice, or so Henry believed, and he was quick to follow up the apparent advantage.

"Hugh, what made you so afraid of those fires? You acted like a frightened child. I was ashamed of you."

"Ashamed of me, lad — I mean Lieutenant? I don't understand."

"Why did n't you stop when I called to you?"

"Called to me, Lieutenant? I don't understand."

Was Hugh shamming? If so, it was the first time Henry had ever known him to attempt that, and yet it was almost impossible for him not to believe that he had really seen his friend fleeing from the island in the swamp. The problem was becoming more and more puzzling, and at last Henry decided to say no more until morning. In the light he would be better able to judge of the trapper's sincerity, for he then could observe the expression upon his face. Accordingly he turned away, saying, "Never mind now, Hugh. We'll talk about it in the morning. You can tell me all about it then."

"About what, Lieutenant? I don't understand. Tell me what it is."

"In the morning, Hugh. Go back to bed now. I'm sorry I disturbed you."

Henry from his own bunk could see that

the trapper for a long time remained seated on the edge of his own bed, apparently thinking over what had been said to him and evidently seriously troubled. Several times Henry was minded to speak to him and declare that he was satisfied that it was all a mistake, but he restrained himself, and at last he perceived that his friend had stretched himself upon his bed, and apparently soon was sleeping again.

The wearied young officer, too, was soon asleep, and when he awoke the sun was streaming in upon him. He could see Hugh as he busied himself about the hut preparing their breakfast, and through his half-closed eyes he watched the trapper as several times he paused in his occupation and gazed thoughtfully at the bunk where he was sleeping. Henry's heart smote him as he watched the actions of his faithful friend, and when at last he arose and dressed he was resolved not to trouble the trapper with any more questions. He must have been deceived, he assured himself, and have mistaken the form of another man for that of Hugh.

When his breakfast was prepared and he had seated himself before the rude little table his fears, however, returned, for it was evident

that the trapper was keenly watching him. Several times Henry was aware that when he thought that he was unobserved Hugh was curiously observing him, and the expression of his face at once caused all the young officer's fears to return. However, he did not speak until he had eaten his breakfast, and then suddenly, as he rose from his seat and stood face to face with the trapper, he said, —

“Tell me all about it, Hugh.”

“About what, la— I mean Lieutenant?”

“You know what I mean, Hugh,” said Henry sternly.

“Can't say that I do, lad,” responded the trapper, striving to speak lightly.

“Listen, Hugh, then, and I'll tell you where I was last night and what was done.” Henry repressed the smile that rose to his face as he saw that Hugh turned abruptly away, pretending to be busy in his labors. “Don't you want to hear about it?” he demanded.

“'Course I do. I'm always interested in what you're doing, lad. Wasn't I the one that always said you'd be an officer an' the country would hear from you?”

Hugh's attempt to speak lightly was almost pathetic; but firmly convinced now that his surmise had been correct and that his friend

not only had been present, but now was trying to conceal something from him, Henry was determined to go on with his story and not spare the feelings of the trapper until he knew all that was to be learned.

Accordingly, avoiding the glance of the man as he spoke, Henry began: "I fancy you know, Hugh, that there is a big swamp back here over behind the hills. Why, yes, I recall now that you told me that Simon Safford had made fools of some of the men by pretending to know of a place where a chest of coin was buried there. It must have been in that same swamp. I trust that he did n't fool too many of our poor fellows and get those half joes out of their pockets you were telling me about. It was half joes he wanted, was n't it, Hugh?" he said quickly, glancing directly and in apparent innocence up into the trapper's face as he spoke.

"I believe I did hear tell somethin' on it," replied Hugh foolishly, averting his head.

"I'm glad you were warned of it in time, Hugh. You don't know what a comfort it is to me to know that Connecticut Yankee can't get the half joes out of the pockets of any of my men. I'd make it warm for him and for them too, if ever I heard of such a thing!"

It was cruel, for Henry could see that his friend was suffering keenly under his words, but it was not yet the time for mercy. "Well," he continued, "as I was telling you, we had heard of a robber, a regular rascal, who was doing all sorts of things hereabouts for which he deserved hanging, who was hiding there in that swamp, so last night we set a trap for him" —

"Did you get him?"

"Keep still, Hugh, till I tell you the story. We went in there last night, and among some other things we saw there was a trick that might scare women and children, but it does n't seem as if even Simon Safford, if he'd been there himself, would have been so foolish as to try it on us."

"What was it?" inquired Hugh eagerly.

"Oh, they set off some lights and did a few other foolish things. Probably he, or they — for we know now there was more than one rascal in there — thought they'd scare us off; but it did n't work, Hugh. Such things might do for these men you say Simon Safford fooled, but not for us."

In the clear light of day the recollections of the sights Henry had seen in the preceding evening were very different from the events as

he had seen them, and the young officer was honest in his belief that they were mere devices to frighten away any who might venture too near the hiding-place. Of his own feelings at the time he did not feel called upon to speak.

"How do you know they did n't amount to anything?"

"We could tell that the minute we saw them. They did n't stop us, at all events. We kept right on."

"You did?"

"Certainly. You don't suppose we'd stop for any such thing as that, do you?"

"Did you get him?"

"We got a part of what we went for, but not all. But we found out some things we didn't know when we started, and that's something. We got hold of some men and found out some of the others who were there."

"Who were they?" Hugh was looking out of the door as he spoke and his face could not be seen.

"It'll all come out in due time, Hugh, and I should n't want to be in the places of those men when it does, either. I tell you, Hugh, Captain Martin is n't a man to stand much nonsense."

“What do you think will be done with these men, lad?”

“Oh, I think it’ll depend a good deal upon how they act when they’re asked about what took place. Probably some’ll get the gauntlet, some the whipping-post, and some may be shot or drummed out of the camp.”

Hugh’s face was ghastly as it was turned for a moment toward Henry, and then he bolted from the room. Henry made no attempt to follow him, but as soon as his morning tasks were done he started toward the quarters of his friend Captain Martin, eager to learn what had been done with the prisoner and what further information had been obtained.

He was busily thinking over these things when he was rudely pushed from his place, and glancing up angrily perceived that he was face to face with John Lippard. The unexpected presence of the man who, he had heard, had fled from the camp and deserted the army, was disconcerting, but not nearly so much so as the leer upon his face.

“Beg your pardon, Lieutenant, I did n’t go to do it. I would n’t do such a thing to an officer, no, not even for ten pounds of pork.”

There was no one near, and there was an air of sneering confidence in the man that

was more puzzling than the fact of his unexpected presence.

"I accept your apology," replied Henry quietly, although his face flushed as he spoke.

"That's kind o' ye. 'Tis n't all ye'll accept though, afore ye're done with it, I'll give ye my word for that!" he suddenly added.

Ignoring the threat, Henry turned as if he would pass on, but he was not to be so easily rid of the presence of his enemy.

"You remember what I say to you, Henry Miner! I've found out what the whipping-post is like, and I've had such a good time I intend that all those who helped me to it shall have a taste of it themselves, or my name is not Jack Lippard! Some day I'll give you the treat and you'll understand just how warm my feeling is" —

Henry had been walking slowly on, striving to ignore the man, but he had been unable to shake him off. His presence in the camp seemed almost unaccountable, and the air of confidence he exhibited was stranger still.

It was at this moment that he beheld Captain Martin himself approaching, and with a feeling of deep relief Henry turned to the man and said, "Jack, I don't want to make any more trouble for you, but if I hear another

word from you I'll see that you are sent to the guardhouse again!"

John Lippard looked fearlessly at the young officer, and although he did not reply he laughed loudly and insolently as he turned away.

"Captain Martin," said Henry quickly as the officer approached, "what is Jack Lippard doing here? I thought you said he'd deserted. I didn't know just what to do when I saw him."

Captain Martin smiled as he said, "I don't mind telling you that he was the man we caught last night."

"In the swamp?"

"In the swamp."

"The one who was so covered with mud we could n't tell who or what he was?"

"The very same. When we had dug the mud from him who should it be but Jack himself."

"But I thought you said he'd deserted."

"Did I? If I recollect aright, I think I said it was 'reported' that he'd deserted. I didn't care how much it was 'reported,' — the more the better for our purposes."

"Then he had n't really deserted? And he belongs here now?"

“Yes, Jack is not such a bad fellow, though he has his faults, as you and I know. But I don’t mind telling you that he was the very one who told us of the place where we went last night and offered to help us catch the rascal. He said he knew him and would go in with him, or at least he’d pretend to, and be on hand at the capture. But as it turned out he was the only one we got.”

Surprised by the statement of the captain, Henry now had no difficulty in accounting for the boldness of the man in the interview which he had just had with him, but confidence in his trustworthiness had not in the least been strengthened by the captain’s words.

CHAPTER VIII

HUGH'S EXPLANATION

THROUGHOUT the day Henry Miner was seriously perplexed over the puzzling problem which had been presented. The relation of John Lippard to Captain Martin and to the outlaw whom they had striven to capture, was still unexplained, while the part which Hugh had had in the adventure was even more difficult to understand. That the trapper had knowingly had any share in the evil deeds he did not for a moment believe, and was confident that in due time Hugh would explain all to his complete satisfaction; but for the present he could not expect to break down the reserve of his friend. His only fear in his case, now that he was convinced that Hugh really had been on the island in the swamp, was that others might learn of the fact and that then his friend would be treated with a severity greater than the facts warranted or he deserved.

His problem was still unsolved when late

in the afternoon he was returning to his quarters. As he came near, he perceived a party of a half dozen men emerging from the woods and approaching the camp. Their actions interested him, and as he perceived in their midst a man hatless and without a coat, with his hands bound behind his back, he stopped abruptly to watch their further proceedings.

He soon discovered that the prisoner was unknown to him, but as Captain Martin himself was in the little band his mind instantly reverted to the recent excitement and he instantly concluded that some one had been taken who had had a part in the events of the preceding night.

As the little band approached him, Captain Martin, perceiving him, nodded his head expressively, but did not halt, and soon they had passed out of sight. Henry remained watching them until they disappeared, and then slowly resumed his way toward his quarters. When he arrived, he found that Hugh was there and already engaged in his preparations for supper; but Henry was so busied in his own thoughts that he gave slight heed to his friend, a fact which apparently pleased the trapper, for after one keen glance at the young officer as he entered, he turned to his task

with an eagerness that became quickly apparent in the increased zeal with which he bustled about the room. Neither spoke while supper was being served, and as soon as the frugal repast was ended, Henry at once arose from his seat and started to leave the hut, while Hugh busied himself anew in his own duties.

At the doorway Henry met Captain Martin face to face, and started back in surprise at the unexpected sight of the officer.

"Glad to find you in, Lieutenant," said the captain. "Can you spare me a few minutes? I have something to say to you."

"Gladly, gladly. Come in, Captain," responded Henry, as he led the way into the room and pointed to one of the rude seats.

"You saw us this afternoon?" remarked Captain Martin as he took the seat indicated.

"Yes, sir."

"Did you recognize the man we had?"

"No, sir."

"'T was this robber we've been trying to catch."

"It was!"

"The very man."

"I don't see how" —

Captain Martin laughed as he replied, "Very likely. It was simple enough, though.

All I did was to leave three men behind me when we came out of the swamp."

"And they got him?"

"So it appears."

"Of course you are sure he's the right man?"

"Not the least doubt. He came crawling back there after we left, just as I thought he might do, for I took pains to make our departure as loud and noisy as possible. About two o'clock this afternoon, sure enough the rascal showed up and the three men had him."

"What'll be done with him?"

"That I can't say; it's for others to decide. My part was all done when I'd once placed my hands on him and turned him over to the others."

"Do you think he'll be shot?"

"That I can't say. He deserves it, though. The trouble he's made for us no one can ever describe. The last thing he did was to go to the house of an old man back here, all of whose boys were in our army, and hold the old man over the fire to make him tell where his money was hidden. And to think that our own soldiers have been the ones who have been charged with the thing! Shooting is too good for the rascal!"

"Captain Martin, you are certain that Jack Lippard is all right, are n't you?"

"Oh, Jack is n't exactly the best man in the camp; but he's not the worst. If it had n't been for him I don't believe we'd ever have caught this rascal. He certainly did help us in that."

"Then he did n't desert?"

"Oh, no. We let it get out that he had, but I knew where he was all the time. In fact, I had it arranged with him that he should let us know when the fellow went into the swamp."

"Did he?"

"Yes. He knew the man, it seems, and went with him. As we'd let it get out that Jack had deserted, that helped on the trick, and it all came out right, for now we've got our man. He's locked up at this very minute, and the 'proof of the pudding is in the eating,' you know. However, much as Jack Lippard has helped us, I should n't want to trust him too far. Why do you ask?"

Convinced that for the present at least it would be wiser for him to keep his own counsel, Henry evaded the question by asking another: "You said last night there were others there. Was that so?"

"Yes."

"Have any of them been taken?"

"Not yet. It's early, though. We may get some of them later."

"Have you any idea who they are?"

Henry could almost feel that Hugh had suddenly ceased his labors and that there was a tense silence in the hut. Doubtless the trapper had been a not uninterested listener, and the reply to Henry's query was eagerly awaited by him.

"We're not talking very much about that. Have you any idea who the others may be, Henry?" inquired the captain.

"I saw some men there on the island, as I told you."

"Yes, we all saw them. Did you recognize any?"

The silence in Hugh's end of the hut was intense now and the young lieutenant had no difficulty in understanding the cause of it.

"I could n't tell even that it was Jack Lip-pard I had hold of last night."

"That's so. I don't believe his own mother would have known him," laughed the captain. "It'll all come out; have no fears as to that, lad."

"You are positive, then, that others were mixed up in the affair?"

"Not the least doubt of it. It'll go hard with them too when they are caught. It seems hard to believe, Henry, but I'm afraid there were a few of the poor fellows in the camp who had been drawn into the affair by that rascal. We may have to set another kind of trap for them, but we'll get 'em sooner or later."

"And it won't be any easy road, either, they'll have to travel then."

"No, sir; that it will not!"

"Do you think any of them will own up without being caught?"

"Very likely. They're a cowardly lot as a rule. I should n't be surprised if some one should give the whole thing to us, trying to save his own neck."

"Have you your eyes on any one in particular?"

"You're asking more questions than I can answer," responded Captain Martin with a laugh, as he rose from his seat. "I must be going now, for I just dropped in to let you know we'd caught the ringleader. You did your part well last night, Henry. The Pennsylvania boys are holding up the name of their colony well. We'll try to keep it up. Good-night."

“Good-night, Captain,” responded Henry.

When the visitor had departed the young officer remained seated for a time, thinking over what had been told him and almost unaware of the presence of Hugh in the room. The light was dim, for the sun had long since disappeared below the hills and the night was fast approaching. The sound of the songs and laughter that came from the adjacent huts could frequently be heard, but as Henry was not interested he gave them slight heed. Indeed, he was thinking more of John Lippard and the part he had had in the capture of the outlaw than he was of his own immediate surroundings. And Hugh, too, and his relation to the men on the island in the swamp — that assuredly was not the least of the puzzling elements of the perplexity that beset him.

His meditations were interrupted by the approach of the trapper himself, who silently seated himself beside his young friend, and placing his hand on his knee, inquired anxiously, —

“Henry, do you think there’s anything in what the captain was saying?”

“About what, Hugh?”

“About the men who were on that island last night.”

"I am afraid there is, Hugh."

"I was there, lad," said the trapper simply.

"I know it."

"I did n't mean any harm."

"Why did n't you stop when I called to you?"

"I did n't just know what I was doin', lad. I wish now I had."

"Tell me about it, Hugh," said Henry kindly.

For a moment the elder man was silent. The young lieutenant's heart ached for his friend, who was now evidently seriously troubled. In the presence of certain forms of danger there was no braver man in the American army, — of this fact Henry Miner needed no assurance; but he was also more inexperienced than a child in the ways of men, and especially in the life and discipline of the camp. The most of his days had been passed in the solitude of the forest, and even his visits to the settlements, where he had gone to sell his furs or to purchase his few needed supplies, had all been so infrequent as to intensify his peculiarities rather than to remove them. Of his rugged honesty Henry had not the slightest question; and his fear throughout the day had been chiefly that his

friend had been led into something which he had not fully understood, and that some punishment might fall upon him which would be undeserved and would be visited upon him in spite of his childishness and the lack of any evil intent on his part.

"Yes, I was there," repeated Hugh humbly, "and I wish I had n't been."

"Did you see Jack Lippard?" inquired Henry abruptly.

"Jack? No, I did n't see him. Was he there, too?"

"Go on with your story, Hugh."

"You know Simon Safford" —

"Yes, yes. I know him," interrupted Henry quickly, a light beginning to break in upon him. "Go on, Hugh! Go on with your story."

"Well, he certainly did do some curious things, for I see him myself. Why, lad, one time, he" —

"Did you give him any of your half joes, Hugh?" interrupted Henry again.

"Not exactly to him."

"But you gave some?"

"I s'pose I did," Hugh acknowledged regretfully.

"How many?"

"Two."

"Go on with your story."

"But," protested Hugh, "I thought it was all right. I went with some o' the men with him one or two nights, and he certainly did do some o' the most curious things. Why, lad" —

"Tell me about last night," demanded Henry sharply.

"It was this way, ye see, lad. We'd come to b'lieve him when he said he'd found out just where a whole chest full o' gold an' silver was hid."

"What did he want of *your* money if he knew where so much more was?"

"I had n't thought o' that, lad; I honestly had n't. We was t' give two half joes apiece an' then the box was t' be divided."

"Was the chest supposed to be on that island where you were?"

"The very same, lad," assented Hugh.

"And you were there to get it?"

"Yes."

"How many were with you?"

"Let me see — there was Simon an' me an" —

"How many?"

"Four."

“And you didn’t see Jack Lippard?”

“No. I didn’t know he was there.”

A fresh light had dawned upon the mind of the young officer, and bidding Hugh remain in the hut, he himself at once departed from the building.

CHAPTER IX

THE CIPHER

WHEN Henry Miner had departed so abruptly from the hut it was because of a sudden insight which it appeared to him he had obtained into the cause of the confusion which had arisen the preceding evening. It was clear to him now that the trapper and his three friends had been led to the island where they had been discovered by Simon Safford himself, and as far as Hugh himself was concerned the motive which had governed him was solely that which pertained to the discovery of the chest which the shrewd Yankee had declared was to be found there. That Hugh had had any other purpose or any knowledge of the presence of the robber whom Captain Martin had planned to secure, he did not for a moment believe. Whether or not his own conviction would be accepted by the officers he did not know, and as he thought over the plight of his friend he was seriously troubled, for, like many another man, he was cer-

tain to suffer, in spite of his innocence, because of the company in which he had been found. As to the innocence of his companions, or at least of Simon Safford, he was by no means so fully convinced. His better plan, he had hastily decided, was to lay the entire matter just as it was before Captain Martin and leave him, after he had been given the explanation, free to follow out his own best judgment. The fact that the captain was personally acquainted with Hugh would surely be in his favor, and of the cool judgment of the officer Henry entertained the highest opinion.

He was nevertheless seriously troubled as he hastened toward the quarters of Captain Martin, and was thinking of the various means he might use to assist his anxious and guiltless friend. When he arrived at the place he was seeking, his feeling of disappointment was keen when he learned that Captain Martin was not there and that he had left word that he would not return before the following morning. Accordingly, the young lieutenant returned to his own quarters, and as he discovered that Hugh already had sought his bunk, he decided to follow his example and leave the matter uppermost in his thoughts until the following day.

But when the day dawned there was such keen excitement in the camp that all other matters were speedily banished from the mind of Henry. The entire army was soon in motion, and as it was currently reported that Washington had received word that General Howe with all his army was moving swiftly up the Hudson to go to the aid of John Burgoyne, who was supposed to be advancing from the north, every man was confident that he fully understood just what the sudden movement indicated, and great was the excitement in the ranks.

It was true that there had been other rumors and reports of the doings and plans of the British leader, and that Washington already had several times moved to meet or check him, and every such rumor had proved to be nothing more than that which the British general had intended it to be, — a mere attempt to confuse the Americans or to draw them from their stronghold on the Morristown hills into a position where he might be able to attack them successfully. This time, however, the report seemed to be confirmed, and the excitement in the advancing American force was correspondingly keen.

A division was left in Morristown, but with

the remainder of the army Washington advanced to the rear of Haverstraw, and when General Sullivan and General Stirling were sent across the Hudson to Peekskill the men were all convinced that this time serious action lay before them and that an engagement with the redcoats was certain to occur.

When the report was confirmed, as it soon was, that they had been led out of camp by another ruse of the British general, and the army once more had marched back to Morristown, many of the men were loud in their complaints of the stupidity of their leaders.

At one time Howe would send his fleet from New York as if he was about to move upon Boston, but no sooner would the Americans be prepared to act than the news would be received that he had abandoned that project and then was preparing to move up the Hudson or to sail away for Philadelphia. The uncertainty and perplexity of Washington were therefore all the time keen, and the only thing the troubled leader could do was to try to be ready for action when the British general had fully determined as to his plans. Whether or no General Howe himself just knew what to do is a question over which to-day historians are by no means agreed.

When the American army returned to its camping-place at Morristown, Henry Miner was free to think once more of the predicament in which his friend Hugh was. Of what had become of the captured robber he had not heard a word, and indeed he had not once seen Captain Martin since the time when the latter had sought him out in his hut. Henry was now somewhat undecided whether it was better for him voluntarily to relate his story to the captain, when it might be that nothing more would be said or done in the matter, since some time had elapsed since the night of the adventure, or to keep silence even until he himself might be questioned or Hugh brought to book for the part he had taken. He at last decided to follow the latter course, at least for the present, and with this decision once formed he did not refer to the matter again in his friend's presence. Hugh, too, seemed to have regained his natural spirits, and the life of the camp was moving on in its ordinary routine, when one evening, not long after the events already recorded, John Lip-pard himself appeared before the door of the hut occupied by Henry and Hugh.

He respectfully saluted the young officer and then inquired if either of the men had

seen anything of Simon Safford. It was the first time for several days that Hugh had heard the man referred to, and the trapper was grateful that the dim light concealed the flush that rose to his cheeks.

"I don't know Simon Safford," responded Henry quietly.

"Perhaps Hugh does," suggested the visitor.

"Have you seen Simon Safford to-day, Hugh?" said Henry turning to his friend.

"Have n't seen him for a week," replied Hugh in a low voice.

"You did see him a week ago then, did you, Hugh?" said John Lippard, and he laughed loudly as he asked the question.

"Hugh may have seen him then, but he tells you he has n't seen him to-day," said Henry sharply. "That was what you wanted to know, you said."

"Oh, yes, that's so, so it was. I'd most forgotten." Jack Lippard again laughed loudly as he spoke. "Perhaps I might talk with you about the time when you *did* see him," he suggested.

"You'll not talk with him or with me about anything now! Move on!" said Henry angrily, rising from his seat.

"I'm in no hurry, but I might as well be goin'," responded the man. "It may be some other time you'll not be so anxious for me to get out. I hear they're makin' up a list o' names o' those who've had dealin's with the robber what was caught a few nights ago out in the swamp. Oh, I'm goin'," he added quickly as the young officer advanced toward him. "I'm not fond o' bantams an' their struts. The only way I like 'em is when I've given their necks a good twist. Like that," he added, as he used the motion commonly employed in wringing the necks of fowls.

Henry was thoroughly enraged now, and calling to Hugh to follow him at once darted through the doorway. But John Lippard had fled and could nowhere be seen, and in a brief time the two men returned to the hut. As they entered, Henry perceived something white on the ground and picked it up as he went into the room. He stood holding the bit of paper in his hand as Hugh disconsolately began to speak.

"I s'pose they'll have me at the whipping-post soon," he said.

"I don't think so," said Henry quickly. "You may have been a fool, Hugh, but we all know you're no knave."

"Might almost as well be one as the other."

"Not every time."

"One time's all that's required."

"Have you seen any of the men who were with you?"

"No, not one."

"Don't say anything to any one about it, Hugh."

"But Jack Lippard knows, and he's threaten' trouble."

"He'd like to hurt me by making trouble for you, but we'll beat him at his own game, Hugh. Don't you be afraid of it."

"But I am," persisted Hugh. "A fool's almost's bad's a knave."

"No; a fool may learn, but a knave won't. You won't put any more half joes in the swamp, I'll promise that."

"I shan't go near the swamp again in all my mortal days!"

"I'm not so sure about that. We may want you to go, you know."

"I'll go just as often as you want me to, lad—I mean Lieutenant," said the trapper humbly.

Henry laughed as he advanced toward the fire which was still smouldering in the fireplace, intending to throw upon it the note which he

had found outside the door. Before he did so he held the bit of paper up to the light for a moment and gazed curiously at it. It was a small piece, and upon it were a few characters, unintelligible and awkward. Evidently they were meaningless, and Henry drew back his hand and then suddenly began to examine the note more attentively. His interest speedily became keener, and looking up he said quickly, "Hugh, have we any tallow dips left?"

"I think there is one."

"Light it right away and put it on the table here."

"Anything wrong, lad?" said Hugh anxiously as he obeyed.

The young lieutenant made no reply, but as soon as the dip was placed upon the table he spread out the paper and began to study it with great care. His companion, aware of his deep interest, became silent as he perceived that his young friend was absorbed in his task.

Upon the paper at which Henry was staring were written the following strange characters:—

4778 47 10 6X*4X 67970 8[4[58[X

The characters were indeed peculiar, and at first Henry had no thought that they were

not the mere scratches or scribblings of some careless man, but as he gazed more carefully at them he began to perceive that there might be something more than he at first had seen. The feeling was intensified by the thought that Jack Lippard had been the only one to come to the hut within an hour and that perhaps the paper had belonged to him. That fact did not detract from his interest, and soon he called for his goose-quill pen and began to write as he studied the curious bit before him. The first discovery he made was that if it was a note in cipher, then there were evidently six words in the message. One of the characters occurred in four of the words, and at once he wrote, "4=4 times." Next he discovered that another character, 7, was also in three words, occurring in each of two words twice. Doubtless it must be a vowel, and doubled.

For a time he could make little headway, and then he began to consider what the first short word might be. It consisted of only two letters. The most natural inference was that being so short a word it was a pronoun and referred to the writer. He would try the word as "me," and use the two letters.

Following this suggestion he wrote out the

line with these letters filled in, which gave him, "Mee- me - - - - m - - e - e - - - m - - - - -."

For a moment he gazed steadily at the incomplete line and then smiled as he became convinced that his conjecture had been correct. It was now easy to fill out the first word, which must be "meet." If that was so, then he already had the first two words, "meet me." But where and when was the unknown writer to be met? For a long time Henry puzzled himself over the query. If there was to be a meeting it must be "at" some place or "in" some place. He wrote "Meet me ^{at}_{in} —." If the word was "at," then the fourth word perhaps referred to time, but he could think of no word of time having "m" as the fifth letter. Perhaps it was not the hour but the place, and acting upon that suggestion he began to count upon his fingers the names of the various places where a meeting might be held. He thought of "hill," "valley," "camp," "house," "barn," and suddenly "swamp" flashed into his mind. The word contained five letters, the fourth of which was "m." Instantly he wrote "Meet me ^{at}_{in} swamp."

Now when was the meeting to be? The following word must be the name of the hour,

and already he had the place and the names of two letters. One, two, three, four, five, six, seven — he stopped abruptly in his counting. Seven — there was no other that had in it “e” twice and in this order. The solution was dawning upon him. “Meet me ^{at}_{in} swamp seven —.” He had all but one word now, and soon he would have that, he assured himself gleefully.

CHAPTER X

A TRANSLATION AND WHAT CAME OF IT

THE solution of the final word was, however, more difficult than the young officer had believed. For a long time he sat staring at the tantalizing paper, with its words still more puzzling because of his ability to decipher a part of them. It was evident to Henry as he studied the paper that in the concluding word one letter occurred three times, and also that the third letter, if his preceding conclusions had been correct, was "m." It was a natural inference also that the word itself would indicate the time at which the proposed meeting was to occur.

He slowly counted off and spelled the days of the week, but not one of them would fit in with his solution. "At seven" — when was the hour and of what? He tried "morning," "evening," and various other words, but none of them met the requirements.

At last, after he had struggled over the problem for a half hour, he rose in desper-

tion and passed out from the hut. The evening was comparatively cool, and the night air was doubly refreshing to him as he slowly paced back and forth in front of the building. Up and down, and back and forth, he slowly moved, his mind intent only upon the word which still baffled him. What word of eight letters, the third letter of which was m, was there that would suggest the date where the "seven," which he believed to indicate the hour, would apply? He again tried the days of the week, but none filled the demands. He began with the days of the month, "first, second, third," etc., but not any of these had eight letters, the third of which was "m." He was as far from the solution apparently as when he began, while the very fact that he had deciphered several of the words only served to make his present perplexity the more exasperating.

Again he entered the hut and seated himself, staring blankly at the mystical characters before him. As he glanced up for a moment he perceived that Hugh was anxiously watching him, and, smiling as he spoke, Henry said, —

"I'd like to ask you a question, Hugh."

"What is it, lad — I mean Lieutenant?"

You know I have no such head on me as there is on your shoulders. I'll do what I can, though."

"Hugh, I'm going to read you a question, or rather a part of one, and I want you to finish it for me. Will you do it?"

"I'll try, lad."

"Well, here it is: 'Meet me at or in the swamp seven' — Now what would you say the last word should be?"

"I did n't think that of you, lad. I surely did n't."

"Think what of me, Hugh?" said Henry in surprise. It was evident that the trapper was seriously grieved over something, but for the moment the young lieutenant was unable to conjecture what the cause might be.

"I did n't think you'd poke fun at me about that swamp matter again. I have n't got my half joes back, but I shan't give any more. You need n't think you've got to keep at me, lad, about that affair."

"Why, Hugh!" exclaimed Henry quickly, "I was n't even thinking of that or of you. I've found a bit of a puzzling piece of paper here, and I've worked out a part of it, but I can't make out the last word. I did n't know but you might help me."

"I'll do all I can; you know that, lad," replied the trapper, quickly mollified. "But I'm no good at readin', — that you know. Where d'ye get the paper?"

"I found it on the ground in front of the door."

"Our door here?"

"Yes. I've a notion that Jack Lippard might have dropped it."

"Jack Lippard? Then it's a piece o' rascality, that's what it is!"

"I believe you're right, and if I could only make out the last word, I'd be more certain of it. Now what would you naturally say, Hugh, if you were to use those words? I said" —

"But I couldn't use 'em! I told you I wasn't goin' to have anything more to do with Simon Safford. They'll get no more half joes out o' me."

"I understand; but just suppose you were to use those words and wanted to make an appointment with me to meet you at or in the swamp so that we might make Simon give up the half joes. What would you say?"

"Just say those words again, lad," said Hugh thoughtfully.

"Meet me at or in the swamp seven" —

“He must be a fool to say meet me ‘at or in.’ Why does n’t he say just what he means, — whether he wants to meet ye down there on the border o’ the swamp or in there where those islands are, for I s’pose that’s about what he wants, is n’t it?”

“He does n’t state it as you put it, Hugh. I’m the one who uses both words, for I don’t know really which it is, ‘at’ or ‘in.’ Perhaps if I could find the last word I’d be better able to tell.”

“‘Meet me at seven at the swamp,’” said Hugh aloud slowly, as if he was speaking to himself. “It can’t be to-day he means, for it’s more ’n seven already. Mebbe” —

“That’s it! You’ve hit the bull’s-eye, Hugh! We’ve got it now.”

“We have?” responded the trapper, somewhat dazed and yet nevertheless greatly elated over Henry’s praise and manifest excitement.

“Yes, we have it now. The word’s ‘to-morrow.’ Don’t you see? That’s the word that has eight letters just the same as this cipher has, and the third letter is ‘m,’ and the second letter is used three times. You’ve hit it, Hugh! You’ve got it just as sure as you’re in this camp.”

“I’m glad on it, though I don’t see yet.”

"The only thing I can't see is what that 'to-morrow' means. It might be that he had this note sent him yesterday or last week, and if it was sent then, why 'to-morrow' might mean to-day, or even some day last week."

"It could? I don't see it. Just tell me, lad, how it is that 'to-morrow' can mean last week or to-day. 'To-morrow' has just got to mean to-morrow, has n't it?"

"Yes; but it might have been the to-morrow after the day when the man that wrote this note, sent it. See, Hugh?"

"No, I don't see. Ye say to-morrow is jest the same 's last week. I never had much book learnin', Lieutenant, but I guess I know enough to know that day afore yesterday and to-morrow don't mean the same thing. Talk about my givin' up my half joes!"

Henry laughed good-naturedly, for the trapper evidently was recovering a measure of his confidence and was rejoiced at the opportunity of asserting himself again.

"I've got all but that third little word," he says, "but for the life of me I can't tell whether it's 'at' or 'in.' What do you say, Hugh?"

"It might be either."

"Yes, I suppose it could. You tried both, did n't you, Hugh?"

"There, Henry, I did n't think you 'd bring that up again," said the trapper reproachfully.

"I'm not bringing anything up, Hugh," said the young lieutenant quickly. "All I want to find out is which word it is here. You did meet at both places, did n't you, Hugh?"

"We was more at one than we was in the other."

"Very likely. Now let me see," said Henry thoughtfully, as he bent his gaze once more upon the puzzling paper. 'Meet me at' or 'Meet me in,' which is it? It'll make all the difference in the world, or at least the difference of the swamp, which it is. Ah, yes. I think I have it now," he added eagerly. "That third letter in swamp is an 'a,' and the first letter of the word is n't the same, so the word itself can't be 'at.' If it is n't 'at' then it must be 'in.' I've got the whole thing now, Hugh!" He glanced up again at the trapper, who was deeply interested in all that his young friend was doing. "Here it is. 'Meet me in swamp seven to-morrow.' Now if I only knew what 'to-morrow' meant!"

"Humph!" sniffed the trapper. "I have n't

much brains to brag of an' none to spare ; but if I didn't know enough to know what to-morrow means then I'd crawl into a bear's den somewhere and pull the hole in after me. Leastwise I'd never come out ! ”

Henry laughed as, ignoring the remarks of his friend, he inquired, “ Judging from your experience, Hugh, would you say that seven to-morrow meant seven in the morning or seven at night ? ”

“ That's something no man can say. It might be one, and then again it might be the other. ”

“ That's clear as daylight, Hugh. ”

“ Yes, I s'pose 'tis, ” assented the trapper simply.

“ Which did you use more, Hugh ? ”

“ That is n't fair, lad. I'm sorry 'nough for what I did, an' it's got me into a peck o' trouble. I wish I was out o' it. ”

“ I think we can fix that all right, Hugh, ” responded Henry, perceiving that his friend was hurt by his remarks. “ But seriously, Hugh, when did you see the men, — in the morning or at night ? ”

“ Sometimes one an' sometimes the other, ” replied Hugh glumly.

“ Well, I've read the riddle, any way, ” said

Henry lightly. "It's the first time I ever tried to read a cipher, and to my mind this is a good one, too."¹

Elated by the success which had crowned his efforts, Henry Miner at once decided to seek out Captain Martin and lay before him the discovery which he had made, and bidding Hugh remain in the hut until he should return, he hastily departed and at once sought the quarters of his friend.

To his delight, he found Captain Martin in his place and at once placed before him the note he had found and the translation he had made. The officer laughed lightly when the young lieutenant began to speak, but he had not proceeded far in his explanation before Captain Martin was as deeply interested as was the younger man. He listened attentively to the story Henry had to tell, and then using the key which had been discovered, he carefully followed out every letter, Henry mean-

¹ The characters used in the cipher message which Henry had read were those which were in actual use at the time. They are taken from a code which was used by some of the Loyalists or "Tories" in their correspondence with some of the unstable or unreliable men who were enrolled in the American army at Morristown. Knowledge of the plans or movements of the British was in this manner conveyed to traitors in the camp.

while watching him with an interest he was at no pains to conceal.

At last the captain glanced up from the soiled note in his hand and said, "Well, Lieutenant, I'm inclined to think you've found something."

"So am I," responded Henry quickly. "The only question in my mind is the day which that word 'to-morrow' means."

"You say you found the note this evening?"

"Yes, sir. About two hours ago."

"And Jack Lippard was the only one who could have dropped it?"

"He was the only one who has been to our quarters."

It was too dark to permit Henry to see that the captain's face clouded for a moment, but he waited respectfully for him to speak.

"We might call Jack and ask him about it," suggested Captain Martin.

"Yes, sir," assented Henry. "But do you think that is best?"

"Decidedly," responded the captain. "Please to remain here until I return."

Stepping outside the building, the captain summoned an orderly and bade him go at once and summon John Lippard to come to

his quarters. He then reëntered the building, and conversed with the young lieutenant concerning other matters, not once referring to the deciphered note or to the man for whom he had sent.

When an hour had elapsed and his orderly returned with the statement that John Lip-pard was not to be found and that none of his friends knew where he was, or if they knew, no one would declare, he turned to Henry and said, —

“I think, Lieutenant, we’d better go out to that island and be there at seven in the morning. Is that your opinion?”

“Do you intend to go?” inquired Henry quickly.

“Most assuredly. A meeting implies that there will be two at least who will be there, and you ought not to go alone.”

“I had thought I would take Hugh with me.”

“Excellent. Take him any way. He’s just the man for us, but we want no one else. We three will be sufficient, I’m certain.”

“At what time shall we start?”

“I’ll come to your quarters about three in the morning.”

“We can come here,” suggested Henry quickly.

"I'll come to your quarters," repeated the captain quietly.

When Henry Miner returned to his hut, he awakened Hugh, who was soundly sleeping, and explained to him the project which had been formed. The trapper listened attentively, and said when Henry had told him all, "That is the best thing I've heard in weeks, for it'll give me a chance to show Captain Martin that I am not a fool or a traitor. Go to sleep, lad, I mean Lieutenant, and I'll call you in time."

After the young officer arranged his bunk, he was soon sleeping, nor did he know that the trapper remained awake all the night, so eager was he for the expedition. At three o'clock Captain Martin appeared, and the three men soon crept forth in the darkness, the sentinels were saluted and passed, and in a brief time the little band arrived on the borders of the swamp.

CHAPTER XI

AT THE MEETING PLACE

HENRY MINER was surprised to perceive the same negro, Moses, who had been his guide in the former expedition, now awaiting them on the borders of the swamp. There had been no debate as to the place which the little party was to seek, for, as all the paths in the swamp led to the islands in the centre, it had been accepted as a matter of course that the meeting place must be there.

There was no delay, now that Moses had been found, and with the black man leading the way and the captain close behind him, while Hugh was the rear guard, the four men advanced into the depths of the swamp. There was no haste, for if the hour designated in the note should prove to be seven o'clock in the morning, they still would have ample time to wait after they had arrived at the island which they were seeking. Accordingly they proceeded leisurely, leaping from hummock to hummock and frequently halting, —

until all four stood together on some mound larger than others, and listened attentively to discover whether or not other men were in the vicinity.

The silence of the great swamp, however, was unbroken. The dim outlines of the bushes and trees, the weird appearances of the dark waters, the very hour at which they were moving, all united in deepening the effect in their minds of the purpose of their coming. Even the black guide seemed to share in the suppressed feeling of excitement, but as he was with Captain Martin, in whom his confidence was supreme, the terror which had possessed him at the time of the former expedition seemed in a measure to be wanting now.

Steadily the men kept to their way and at last arrived at the island where the flames and the swaying body had startled and scattered the little band which had fled on the previous night. Here a brief halt was made, and after a consultation it was decided that the party should be divided, and that two should go on to the adjacent island and two should remain where they then were, in order that no mistake might be made if by some chance either spot might be neglected.

Henry and Hugh were selected to go to

the other island, and as they at once prepared to depart, the captain said, —

“ Here, I’ve had Moses bring some breakfast for us. You take part of it and we’ll take the other. Now if anything happens you’re to let us know, and if you have to use your guns, don’t hesitate. We’ll make short work of traitors, and if we are compelled to, we’ll take only *reports* back to camp, and leave the rest right here in the swamp.”

Hugh at once took the share that the captain placed in his hands, and then he and his young comrade departed to the adjacent island. This island was somewhat larger than the other, and as the light, though dim, was not yet sufficient to enable them to see clearly about them, the two watchers made a hasty examination and then decided to eat their breakfast before entering into the specific task for which they had come.

When the hasty meal had been disposed of, Henry said, “ Now, Hugh, I think it’ll be better for me to take my stand on the opposite side of the island and leave you to watch these two sides here.”

“ That’s for you to say, Lieutenant.”

“ If either of us sees anything of the men we’re looking for, he’ll have plenty of time

to go to the other one and tell him, so that both of us can be on hand when they come."

"I think that's a good scheme, lad — I mean Lieutenant."

"It must be somewhere near six o'clock now," continued Henry, glancing about him in the clear light which now covered all things. "We shan't have long to wait."

Hugh did not reply, and Henry at once departed for the opposite side of the island. There he selected a spot that was slightly elevated above the shore, and well protected by a thick growth of young trees. In the midst of these the young lieutenant seated himself, and satisfied that his presence would not easily be discovered by any one who might approach on the side he was watching, he made ready for his vigil.

The mists and vapors that hung low over the swamp were now being burned away by the light of the rising sun, which like a great ball of fire had appeared low in the eastern sky. There was the promise of an exceedingly warm day, but the place in which Henry was seated was comparatively cool, and the task before him did not promise to be difficult. He did not believe that more than two men would come to the island for the meet-

ing, for the wording of the note he had deciphered seemed to indicate that plainly. "Meet me in the swamp seven to-morrow." It was a summons from one man to another, and as the young officer thought of the numbers of his own party, there came to him an added sense of security in the very superiority which was theirs.

He lazily leaned back against the tree and surveyed the scene before him. Crows were noisily calling in the distance, some belated blackbirds of brilliant plumage were scolding over something which had gone amiss in their plans, a huge water snake lifted its head from the marsh and then crawled up on the shore. Henry watched it, interested in its movements, and in a moment became excited as two small birds angrily darted at the intruder and with much flapping of their wings and many noisy shrieks of anger, together attacked the snake, which, thus beset, strove desperately to return to the water as it slid down the bank, occasionally lifting its head and striking at its tormentors, that remained just beyond his reach, only to dart quickly at his unprotected body and continue their chattering and attack. At last the snake managed to elude them and regained the safety of the

stagnant waters, beneath which it speedily disappeared from sight, and then the two birds with many expressions of delight also withdrew and silence returned.

Henry had watched their movements, amused by their antics and pleased with the apparent fearlessness of the birds, but now he began to watch more keenly for the approach of the men whom he was expecting to come, for the time was drawing near. He could see for a considerable distance about him, but where the pathway was by which either was to come he could discover no traces. The great swamp seemed to be dotted here and there by clusters of bushes that might indicate a firmer soil from which they were growing, but there was nothing like regularity or order, and how any one would be able to come from the direction in which he was looking he could not understand. However, there were four approaches to the island, he had been informed, and therefore he must continue his watching despite the questions which arose in his mind.

The moments passed, the blazing sun rose higher and higher, and still not a sound broke in upon the scene before him. Seven o'clock must have long since passed, he assured himself, and still there were no indications of the

approaching men. Vague fears began to creep over him. His deciphering of the note, which had been a source of no slight pleasure and pride to him, might have been incorrect. The word "to-morrow" might refer to some day that had long since passed, or as it suddenly occurred to him, the note might have been written by John Lippard himself and had not been delivered to the party for whom it was intended. A hundred vague fears began to beset him and a feeling of mortification possessed him as well. What would Captain Martin think of him now? After all his efforts and the partially concealed pride with which he had announced his discovery, to find that he had led the way in a wild goose chase and brought the men on a useless as well as fruitless search was to add to his feeling of chagrin.

Strongly moved by these thoughts, he rose from his seat, and as he did so perceived Captain Martin and Hugh approaching.

"Seen anything, Lieutenant?" inquired the captain as he drew near.

"Not a thing," responded Henry gloomily.

"The trouble is with that 'seven to-morrow,'" said Captain Martin thoughtfully. "We have no way of knowing positively

whether it is seven in the morning or evening. It can't very well be morning, though, for it's after nine now. If it is n't morning then it must be evening, I fancy," he added, smiling. "That's a fair inference, is n't it?"

"Perhaps so," responded Henry; "but, Captain Martin, it may all be wrong. I may have made a mistake and not read the note right."

"No, I think you had it all right."

"But no one has come."

"That's true; but it's no fault of yours. The only thing I fear is that 'to-morrow' may have been some other day than to-day."

"That's just what I said," interrupted Hugh. "Henry — I mean the lieutenant — tried to show me that to-morrow was just the same as to-day or last week, but I knew better 'n that."

The captain smiled at the trapper's words, but shaking his head, said, "No, the lieutenant has read the note correctly. Of that I have no doubt. The only point is as to just when the 'to-morrow' is. I myself think it's to-day, and as we've proved it was n't in the morning, the only thing that remains for us is to prove that it may be to-night. What do you say, Lieutenant?"

"I think so, too," replied Henry eagerly,

relieved more than he could explain by the confidence which his friend had expressed.

"Very well; then I suggest that you and Sergeant Hugh remain here while Moses and I go back to camp. It might arouse suspicion, if there is a traitor there, if all three of us should be gone at the same time, and besides, I may be able to learn something more. If you agree to it, then you two can stay here, and Moses and I'll come back so that we can be here by seven o'clock to-night and help if our help is needed."

"You don't think, if Jack Lippard is in this, that our being both away from the camp at the same time and all day would make him suspicious, do you?" suggested Henry.

"No," replied the captain after a momentary reflection, "I'll try to look out for that. I'll give you what little there is left of what Moses brought us to eat, and we'll bring something more when we come back to-night. You'll be here all day, and if anything should happen you'll be likely to know it."

"Don't you think it would be better to have Hugh on one island and for me to stay on the other?"

"Decidedly. Only don't let one fail to let the other know if he needs him."

“We’ll agree to that,” laughed the young lieutenant. “I’ll go back to the other island and Hugh can stay right here.”

The plan was agreed to and in a brief time Captain Martin and the black guide departed, and Henry and Hugh took the positions assigned them.

There had been a purpose in Henry’s mind when he had selected the island which he did for his own waiting place, for here it was that the strange sights had been seen in the preceding night which had caused his terror-stricken comrades to flee and leave him alone, and now he planned to investigate them more fully.

Accordingly, as soon as his companions had gone, he at once proceeded to the tree from which the swaying body of the man had been suspended. He first searched on the low limb that reached far out over the ground for any indications of the rope by which the body had been tied, and soon discovered what he concluded must be the marks on the bark. Then he began to look for the body itself. He first searched in the clumps of bushes near by, and was surprised when in the very first one he entered he saw lying upon the ground the object for which he was seeking.

A slight examination revealed the fact that

the body was a dummy, with a head of wood, and clothing hanging upon a loosely joined framework, also of wood. Glass had been set in the places for the eyes, and behind these were hollows blackened as if they had been burned. There were also indications of similar burnings in the places where the mouth and nostrils were indicated, and when Henry also discovered that the limbs were joined to the body in such a manner that they could be moved by the cord which was attached to them, he smiled as he realized that he had before him simply a huge "jumping-jack" clad in the cast-off garments of some man, and in addition having places in the head for some chemical substances that would produce the blazing eyes and nostrils that had terrified Moses and his companions.

The discovery was interesting, but of no special value, for Henry now well knew that Hugh was not likely to be tempted again by the crafty Simon Safford or induced to plant his half joes on the island in the expectation of reaping a more abundant harvest, and it was of Hugh he was thinking most in this connection.

But although he had found the secret of the fires and lights, he was still puzzled to

account for the fact that Simon Safford had chosen the island he did, and why it was that he should have selected the same night for his trickery when the search for the outlaw had been made. Was there any connection between the two events?

So absorbed was the young lieutenant in his own thoughts that he was not aware of an approaching man; and when he looked up and found himself face to face with John Lip-pard, for a moment his consternation was even greater than his surprise.

CHAPTER XII

A PURSUIT

UPON the face of John Lippard there was an expression different from any that Henry had ever seen there. There was an element of fear or consternation mingled with his surprise at the discovery of the presence of the young lieutenant. For a brief time the two men gazed at each other in silence, which Henry was the first to break in upon.

“It is n’t seven o’clock yet, Jack,” he said.

“Seven o’clock? What’s that to do with being here?”

“I was n’t looking for you until then.”

“Looking for me then?” stammered the man. “I don’t understand what you mean.”

To Henry it seemed as if John Lippard was more alarmed than perplexed by his words, and instantly he resolved to follow up his advantage.

“We knew about your appointment,” he said quietly.

“My appointment? I wish you’d explain your riddles.”

"Jack, do you mean to say that you had no word to come here at seven o'clock?"

"Is that why you came?" The expression of the man's face changed now, and the young lieutenant perceived that there might be serious trouble before the interview was ended. It was a comfort to know that Hugh was not far away and might easily be summoned to his aid. Assuming, therefore, a boldness which he was far from feeling, he thrust his hand into his pocket and drew forth the note which he had deciphered and held it forth to the view of the man before him.

"Look at that, will you, Jack? Do you still say you don't know anything about the meeting here in the swamp at seven o'clock?"

For a moment John Lippard stared in astonishment at the paper with its mysterious characters. It was evident that he was not ignorant of its meaning, or so Henry believed, and his confusion was greatly enjoyed by the elated young officer.

"What's the paper?" said John Lippard at last, holding forth his hand to take it.

"No, sir! You don't get that note again!" said Henry with a laugh.

"Where d'ye get it?"

"It does n't make any difference where I got it. The main thing is that I have it."

"What does it say on it?"

" 'Meet me in swamp seven to-morrow.' "

John Lippard's surprise was now complete, and an element of fear was mingled with his astonishment. Henry unconsciously moved back a step or two and his action was instantly taken as an expression of alarm on his part. The bearing of the man changed as he angrily said, "You're too smart to be in the army, Henry Miner! Has any one else seen that note?"

"Yes."

"Who?"

"Some of the officers and the men who are here with me."

John Lippard glanced quickly about him at the words, but as no one could be seen, his confidence was restored, and he laughed sneeringly as he said, "Then you thought you would scare me, did you?"

"I never thought of scaring you. But a man who makes an appointment in the swamp here has a good right to be scared. I'm afraid it's a bad move for you, Jack."

"What are you going to do?"

"Take you back to the camp!"

"Are you?"

“ Yes, sir.”

“ Pray, may I ask just when I’m to be taken ? ”

“ To-night.”

“ Oh, ye’re going to wait till night, are you ? That’s kind of you. Why don’t you take me right away ? What’s the use in waiting till night ? ”

“ We intend to take the other man along with us, too.”

John Lippard stared for a moment into Henry’s face and then laughed aloud. “ Is that so ? ” he inquired, and laughed again as he spoke.

“ Yes, sir, that’s so,” responded Henry quietly. He had been watching the movements of the man before him, apprehensive of a sudden attack on his part, and was prepared for any sudden action ; and now it seemed to him that the decisive moment had arrived.

Suddenly turning sharply about, he shouted, “ Hugh ! Hugh ! Come over here and bring every man you have with you ! ”

Quickly from the adjacent island came the response, “ All right, lad ! All right ! ”

The summons and the unexpected reply evidently startled John Lippard, who plainly

had not believed that there was any one near. Without a word he turned, and, running to the shore, leaped at once upon one of the mounds and swiftly began to make his way into the swamp. Without hesitating a moment, Henry followed, although the way was unknown to him, and he had only time to shout to Hugh to come also. He was eager to overtake the fleeing man, or at least not to lose sight of him, and was exerting himself to the utmost.

He could see the form of John Lippard as he leaped from mound to mound, never once pausing to glance behind him and apparently confident both of his directions and his ability to follow them.

So excited was Henry that he too did not look back to discover if Hugh was following, and for a time sped on in the pursuit. It was speedily evident that John Lippard was gaining upon him. Such leaps and bounds Henry thought he never before had seen. Not once did the man miss his footing, and his energy and strength apparently were tireless. On and on the man fled, and though he was doing his utmost to keep up with him, Henry could see that John Lippard was still gaining.

At last, in desperation, the young lieutenant

halted, and drawing his pistol shouted, "Stop! Stop where you are, Jack, or I'll fire!"

The fleeing man, however, did not heed the call, and Henry quickly raised his weapon and fired. The speed of the man, was not checked, indeed, it seemed to be increased by the report, and in a moment he had disappeared from sight.

Still determined, Henry instantly resumed his pursuit, following in the direction in which he had last seen the man, and with frantic haste leaping from mound to mound, and striving now to exert himself as he had not before. But with all his efforts he was not able to obtain a glimpse of John Lippard, and soon he had arrived at a spot where not even his footprints could be seen on the soft and muddy soil. He was still confident of the direction in which the man was fleeing, and equally certain that he was seeking the shore. His own plan, he hastily concluded, must be to follow still as best he might be able, and perhaps he could intercept him if he should attempt to return to the camp. So eager was he that all other thoughts were abandoned, after he had stopped for a brief moment and shouted to Hugh, so that the trapper might be guided in his direction.

Without waiting to ascertain if his shout was replied to, he quietly resumed his pursuit, if pursuit it might still be termed, and breathless, panting, bespattered with mud, plunged forward through the apparently interminable swamp. All ideas of time or direction were ignored as — intent upon the one thing in his mind — he still struggled forward on his way.

He was aware that his leaps were longer and more difficult now as the hummocks were more widely separated, but he had not relaxed his efforts, and still plunged forward, although he was weary, and the perspiration was rolling in streams down his face. Before him he saw a mound which was even farther distant than the last leap he had made, and rousing himself he jumped for its border. But he was either more tired than he realized or the distance was greater than he had thought, for he failed to gain the mound. With a splash he fell headlong into the mud and water, and when at last after a desperate struggle he succeeded in grasping the bushes and pulling himself up on the firmer ground, he presented a sight which was woe-begone indeed. His face, as well as his entire body, was plastered with mud, and his clothing

soaked with the muddy water. Even his pistol was gone, doubtless dropped in the water when he fell, and despite his efforts to recover it he could not find it.

At last he stood erect and looked about him. Before him the low mounds seemed to lie at even greater distances than were between those which he had recently passed. He was lost, or at least had wandered from the path, and the only thing to be done was to strive to retrace his way until he was once more on familiar ground.

He gazed ruefully at the nearest mound, from which he had last leaped, and the distance seemed to be too great for any man to cover. The attempt, however, must be made, and resolutely approaching the border of the hummock upon which he was standing, he put forth all his strength into the leap that followed.

But again he failed, and once more fell into the filthy swamp. With greater difficulty than before he extricated himself and gained the securer footing of the mound. Breathless, well-nigh exhausted, he stood for a few moments striving to regain his self-control and to think soberly of the problem before him. A glance at the nearest mounds

convinced him that there would be less difficulty now in making his way among them, but he was undecided whether to strive to continue on his way toward the shore or to retrace his way to the island from which he had come. Of the direction in which the former lay he still felt measurably confident ; but it was probable that Hugh had been following him, and if the trapper should pass him, then his perplexity would be still further increased.

Lifting up his voice he shouted, " Hugh ! Hugh ! "

But no reply came to his hail, nor did he hear the trapper's voice, though he shouted again and again.

By this time the sun was low in the western sky, and Henry knew that the night would soon be upon him. Uncertain as he was as to the path which led to the shore, he decided to abandon his attempt to gain that, and instead would strive to make his way back to the island. There he would remain for a time, and then if Hugh did not come back he would follow the pathway with which he was familiar and by which he had entered the swamp, and return to the camp. The fact that now he was without any means of de-

fense was serious, but not so serious as it would be to stay longer where he was.

Accordingly he at once began to retrace his way. For a time the difficulty of leaping from mound to mound seemed to be slight, and then again the distances between them greatly increased. Puzzled by the fact, he stopped and in the deepening gloom looked keenly about him. The mighty chorus of the frogs had begun, and the night birds were darting about the swamp. A sense of loneliness swept over him, and in a moment he realized that again he had wandered from the path.

Hastily, and striving to drive away the unspoken fear that now began to press heavily upon him, he retraced his way until once more he was on ground which he thought he recognized. But it was difficult now to recognize the marks of his feet on the soft earth, and the unspoken fear in his heart became more oppressive. Well-nigh desperate, he paused and looked about him. The dreary stretch of the swamp was all that could be seen on every side of him, and even that was somewhat dim and indistinct in the gathering gloom. Even the direction in which the island lay was something of which he did not

feel positive now ; but do something he must, for to remain on the little mound where he was, was not to be thought of.

Once more he began to search for his way, this time abandoning all haste and looking carefully before him before he leaped. He was thoroughly wearied, and every exertion required his utmost strength. Slowly and painfully he continued on his way, until it seemed to him that he must have gone a much greater distance than that over which he had come. Still, however, he was able to leap from mound to mound ; and every one carried him farther from the place where he had been, and at least must lead the way somewhere. To remain where he was, was impossible.

The stars had now appeared in the sky, and the moon was creeping up from the horizon. He was accustomed to the dim light by this time, and had slight difficulty in making his way, although he had long since abandoned all attempts to trace his pathway by the footprints.

Suddenly a low cry escaped his lips as directly before him he perceived the outlines of a large island which he was positive he recognized as the one from which he had come. With renewed eagerness he pressed forward,

and soon was standing on the shore. It certainly was the very place he had been seeking, but even his delight in the discovery was speedily banished, when darting from behind one of the great trees he beheld a man run swiftly across the island, and he quickly perceived that it was neither the trapper nor John Lippard.

CHAPTER XIII

AN EXCITING MEETING

THE man whom Henry Miner saw before him apparently was young, not much older than he, and was dressed in the ordinary garb of the Jersey farmer. In the dim light the stranger could see the plight in which the young officer was, his clothing and face covered with mud and his appearance woe-begone to the last degree. For a moment neither spoke as they gazed at each other, the stranger evidently moved by a strong feeling of curiosity, while Henry was trying to decide what the unexpected presence of the man on the island in the midst of the swamp might indicate.

The stranger was the first to speak, as, laughing slightly, he said, "You've had a slip, I take it."

"Yes, I fell twice," replied Henry ruefully.

"I thought you knew the path."

"I thought I did, too. I do know it from one side, but not from all sides."

"I looked for you back on the shore. I didn't know but I might meet you there."

Suddenly it flashed into Henry's mind that this might be the very man who had written the note and made the appointment with John Lippard to meet him here. He resolved to be exceedingly careful and strive to lead the man on, for it was possible that he might learn something that would be of advantage to the army at Morristown.

"You wrote that it was to be *in* the swamp," he suggested.

"I wrote? I didn't write anything," retorted the man sharply.

"That's what the note had, any way. It was 'in' the swamp, where we were to meet. What made you so late?"

"Late? I'm not the one to be late. I've been here a good two hours. I'd about made up my mind you had been caught or were not coming. You know who wrote the note, don't you?"

"I thought no names were to be mentioned," Henry ventured to suggest.

"That may be so, though I've heard nothing o' that. You know what you've come for, I suppose?"

The query was perplexing, and for a moment

Henry was at a loss for a reply. It would be easy to rouse the suspicions of the man, who evidently had taken him for some one else, and who it was Henry fancied he had no difficulty in conjecturing. The connection of John Lippard with the recent exciting events, the fact of the note having been dropped by him, as well as that of his presence on the island, were of themselves sufficient to implicate him. But he would nevertheless be guarded in his words and endeavor to learn from the man, if possible, the explanation of his own presence there before he had much to say for himself.

"It is n't likely I'd be here now," he said, "if I had n't had some idea of what I was coming for."

"Do you think any one else knows?"

"How would he know?"

"He might have seen or read the note," suggested the stranger.

"If any one had seen it do you think he'd be likely to read it?"

The man laughed as he replied, "Not unless he'd learned the lingo."

"He could n't learn it without having some one show him. I had trouble enough myself, for at first I could n't make out whether it was 'at' the swamp or 'in' the swamp where I was to meet you."

"Well, you hit it all right. Now, then, what is your plan?"

"I haven't any. I understood that you were to tell me what to do."

"I can do that all right."

"You'd better tell me, so that I can go back to the camp. I'm all wet and muddy, as you can see for yourself."

"I was told that I was either to let you take me back with you as a prisoner and let them find the letter on me, or I could give it to you and you could explain how I got away from you after you'd searched me and got the letter."

"Who was to have the letter? Are you sure he can read it?"

"What!" demanded the man sharply.

Henry instantly perceived that he had made a serious mistake, though just what it was he was unable to conjecture. "You know what I mean," he ventured to suggest.

"Didn't you know the letter was n't in cipher?"

"How should I know?"

"Captain Barnum told me he'd sent word to you just what you were to do with it."

"I didn't get any word. When did they send it?"

“When they sent the note you got.”

“No. All I had was the word to meet you here. I thought you’d tell me all the rest. If you can’t” —

“Oh, I can tell you fast enough. But what do you think of what I said? Shall I go with you or just give you the letter and let you say that I got away?”

“I’ll do just what you say.”

“I don’t want to go into the rebels’ camp. They tell me it’s like running your head into a noose. But I don’t want General Howe’s letter to go astray. I’d rather take all the chances than have that happen.”

Henry’s heart instantly began to beat furiously. “General Howe’s letter!” Then there was something in the interview of far greater importance than he had conceived. That letter he must have somehow, and it would be a pleasure also to take the man with him into camp.

In spite of his dress, the stranger evidently was at least no friend of the colonies, and it was even probable that he was a redcoat in disguise. To secure him would be no small achievement of itself. But, on the other hand, he realized that he was alone and unarmed, for his pistol had been lost in the depths of

the swamp. Then, too, there was a possibility that John Lippard might appear again, and although it was likely he was not known personally to the man before him, still his appearance might lead to serious consequences. He might be the one to suffer if John Lippard should by any chance return, and instead of entering the camp with a prisoner, he might be the one to go to the camp of the British and join the great host of American soldiers that already was confined in New York. He was convinced that the letter must be the matter of supreme importance and to secure that should be the first of his efforts.

“Come! What do you say?” demanded the man impatiently.

“Which do you think is better?” inquired Henry in apparent hesitation, although he had really decided which course he would follow.

“I don’t want to go into the camp unless I have to.”

“That’s just what I think. You know what’s in the letter, don’t you?”

“How should I know? I may have my suspicions, same’s you have; but General Howe does n’t talk over his plans with me. I do what I’m told, — that is, if I can, — and that’s hard enough for me.”

“That’s right! So it is! Give me the letter and you start back.”

“What’ll you say?”

“I shan’t have to say much,” replied Henry. “When they look at me they won’t need to have me talk. I look as if I’d had a tussle with a whole regiment of redcoats, don’t I?”

“You do that!” laughed the man. “And you look, too, as if you’d come out o’ the little end o’ the horn. I think it’ll be all right, though. I can plaster up your face some more and give your clothes a few more cuts if you think it’ll help matters any.”

“I think I’ve got enough as it is.”

“You do look so.”

“So if you’ll let me have the letter, I’ll put straight back to camp and not waste any more time here.” In his eagerness to be gone Henry held forth his hand for the missive, which now seemed to him to be of supreme importance.

“How much were you to have?” said the stranger.

For an instant Henry hesitated. His first impulse was to declare that he was not expecting anything; but he was passing for John Lippard, and such a declaration on his part would be entirely out of keeping with his

assumed character and might make the man suspicious at just the very moment when he desired to quiet his fears, for that letter, he assured himself, he must have now.

"You know that as well as I do," he responded quietly.

"It's big pay. It's as much as I get for all my trouble, and more."

"Keep part of it for yourself, then."

"No, no. It's yours. It's all fair. Here it is," he added, as he drew from his pocket a small bag, which Henry as he took knew from its weight must contain coin.

The young officer thrust the bag into his pocket without another word and said, "Give me the letter and I'll be gone."

Drawing from an inside pocket the letter which he had, the man thrust it into Henry's hand. Trembling with excitement and eager to be gone, he nevertheless strove to repress his feelings, for not yet was it too late for him to fail.

"Come on, then," he said.

"I'm not going your way."

"That's so, I'd almost forgotten," laughed Henry nervously. "Well, good-by to you," he added, holding forth his hand as he spoke.

"Good-by," responded the stranger, as he

grasped the extended hand. "If everything turns out well, it'll be the best night's work you ever did, John Lippard. Good-by, till the next time I see you."

Henry Miner hurriedly shook hands and then abruptly started for the pathway by which he had come to the island and with which he was somewhat familiar. Fearful every moment that the mistake would somehow be discovered, and that he would hear the summons from the man he had left to halt, he did not once glance behind him, but continued swiftly on his way, leaping from mound to mound with an agility that was almost phenomenal in view of the recent trying experiences through which he had passed. But the precious letter was in his possession, and though he was completely ignorant of its contents, the thought of it was a continuous incentive to fresh endeavors, and he did not relax the swift pace at which he was moving until he arrived at the shore of the swamp.

There he paused to regain his breath, and in the dim light drew forth the letter to assure himself of its safety. His excitement increased when he was enabled to make out the name of "Gen'l John Burgoyne" inscribed on the address. For a moment the

importance and value of that which he had in his possession sobered him, and he glanced keenly about him to discover if any one was near. But only the silent trees could be seen before him, and the sombre stretch of the great swamp lay all behind. Convinced that he was alone, he quickly turned and began to run swiftly in the direction of the camp. The region was all familiar to him now, and he lost no time in searching for his way. On and on he sped, leaping over the fallen logs and dodging the tangled brush, until at last he was near the sentries.

Then only did he abandon the swift pace at which he had been running, and endeavored to give the countersign in a tone that would not arouse the suspicions of the guard. He was rejoiced that the darkness concealed the sorry appearance which he knew he must present, but wasting no words and without delaying for any explanation, he at once started in the direction of Captain Martin's quarters, for he had decided that his best plan would be at once to consult his friend and lay before him what he had learned, as well as to place the letter in his hands.

To his intense disappointment, he learned that Captain Martin was not to be found and

had left word that he might not return until the following morning. As Henry turned away he recalled the promise the captain had given him that he would return to the island in the swamp in time for the "meeting" at seven o'clock. But he had failed to appear, or at least Henry had failed to see him. It was possible that Captain Martin at this very time might be in the midst of the swamp, and in serious trouble.

But the letter was, to Henry's mind, of greater importance than any man could be, and he must decide at once what he would do with it. After deliberating for a moment, he quickly decided that his best plan would be to carry the missive to General Washington himself. The method by which he had obtained it, the mystery of the meeting, as well as the name of the great general which he had seen written on the address, all combined to convince him that he held something which the commander himself ought to have. With this thought in his mind he hastened on his way and soon arrived at the tavern in which General Washington had his quarters.

CHAPTER XIV

THE CAMP IS ABANDONED

THE hour was late when Henry Miner arrived at the quarters of the commander, and for a time he found it difficult to convince the guard that he was possessed of information that warranted the arousing of the inmates of the old tavern.

At last, however, by dint of his earnestness and continued appeals, the captain of the guard was summoned, and although the officer was evidently somewhat irritated by the summons, he invited the young lieutenant to enter one of the lower rooms, and peevishly declared that he was ready to listen to his story.

The woe-begone appearance which Henry presented did not increase the amiability of the captain, and after gazing at the lieutenant for a moment in the dim light, he said shortly,—

“ Well, what is it, young man ? You must have matters of importance to get me out of bed at this time of the night.”

"I have," replied Henry simply, as he held forth his missive.

The captain, still showing his irritation, reached forth his hand and took the letter, which he held near the candle, on the low table, and then glanced at the address on the outside. Instantly his manner changed, and he looked sharply up at Henry as he said sternly, —

"Where and how did you get this?"

"I took it from a man who declared he was a messenger of General Howe."

"Where's the man?"

"I don't know. I was glad enough to get away with the letter."

"Where did you get it?"

"In the big swamp."

"In the swamp? What was a messenger of Howe doing there?"

"That I cannot tell you. All I know is that I have the letter. The General can very soon decide whether it contains anything that is important or not."

"How came you to be in the swamp yourself?"

In reply Henry briefly related a part of the story of his adventure, leaving out some of the names and not deeming it wise to enter into all the details.

The suspicious manner of the captain to him seemed to be out of all keeping with what he himself had undergone, and his sharp query as to why a messenger of the British general should be found so near the camp of the American army and not on his way up the Hudson, if he was the bearer of a letter to John Burgoyne, had now impressed him for the first time. Why had he not thought of that before? There certainly was a mystery in it, and he began to fear that there might be some mistake which would even involve himself.

However, there was the letter in the hand of the captain, which fact of itself was eloquent, even if nothing should be found in it; still he assured himself that he had even done well to bring it to the commander's quarters as he had. His own responsibility was ended by the duty he had done.

Bidding Henry remain where he was, the captain at once departed from the room, — going, as the young lieutenant believed, to deliver the letter into the hands of General Washington himself. As soon as he was left alone, Henry seated himself in one of the chairs and prepared to await the return of the captain.

The events of the day slowly passed again before his mind, but in his present state of weariness and perplexity many of them appeared in a different light from that in which he had seen them when they occurred. It certainly was strange that such a place had been selected by John Lippard and the stranger for the delivery of a letter, which, there could be no question, was boldly directed to General John Burgoyne. Although the banks of the Hudson were not many miles away, still the bearer of the letter had gone far out of his way, and there was something unexplainable in the readiness with which he had delivered the missive into the hands of one whom he had mistaken for John Lippard himself. Was it possible that John was carrying out a part which had been assigned him and of which Captain Martin was aware? Surely the apparent confidence which the captain still seemed to have in the man was not the least strange of all the puzzling parts of the problem.

But the more he thought of the matter the more confused did Henry become, and at last, having decided that whatever unaccountable parts there might be, he at least had done what was to be expected of him in delivering the letter as he had, in his weariness he

fell asleep in his chair. How long he had slept he had no means of knowing, when he was awakened by the voice of the returning captain of the guard.

“The letter has been placed in General Washington’s hands,” said the officer, “and there is no necessity for you to wait here longer.”

The young lieutenant quickly rose at the hint, and although he was eager to know whether the letter had contained any information of importance or not, he asked no question, and at once departed for the hut which had served him and Hugh as an abiding place.

As he walked rapidly through the camp, the thought of Hugh and where he had last seen him served to quicken his steps, for he was now eager to discover if the trapper had escaped from the swamp and been able to return to the camp.

When he arrived at the hut, a hasty examination convinced him that his friend had not returned, and a new feeling of anxiety swept over him. He himself knew now so well of the perils of the swamp that his fears for Hugh, despite the shrewd wisdom and experience of the trapper, were aroused. Striving to con-

vince himself that his fears were groundless, for doubtless the man would be able to take good care of himself, he removed his mud-stained garments and soon sought his bunk.

So wearied was he that not even his anxiety for his friend was able to keep him awake long, and it was broad daylight when his eyes again were opened. His first thought was of Hugh, and leaping from his bunk he searched for the trapper, but not a trace of him was to be found. Evidently Sergeant Hugh had not returned.

The clear light of the summer day and the rest he had had served to banish Henry's fears in part, but while he was preparing his food his thoughts were much more of the missing man than of the task in which he was busied, and as soon as he had eaten his breakfast he prepared to start for the quarters of Captain Martin, assured that his friend would be able to tell him something of the missing sergeant.

But Captain Martin could not be found, and unable to discover if he had even returned in the preceding night, Henry slowly turned away, hardly knowing what next to do under the circumstances.

His feeling of perplexity continued through-

out the morning, while he was busied with the duties that fell to him, but when at noontime he was aware that Hugh was still absent and that Captain Martin had not been seen, his anxiety was followed by positive alarm. Something must have happened that now demanded action on his part. That some accident might have befallen one of the party was quite possible, but that both Hugh and the captain should remain away increased his perplexity.

Suddenly it occurred to him that John Lipard might have been heard from or even might have returned to his accustomed place in the camp. It would not be unlike him to do that very thing, and under the impulse Henry at once sought out the quarters where the man was most likely to be found.

His quest here, however, was still unrewarded; and thoroughly alarmed by this time, the young lieutenant decided that a searching party must be formed and a diligent search be made for the missing men. He was about to seek out his colonel and explain his trouble to him when he was aware that a sudden commotion appeared to have broken out in the camp.

The surprise of the young lieutenant was increased when he discovered that the army itself was soon to be in motion. Just what

the plan was or where the destination was to be, no one apparently knew. Henry Miner recalled the letter addressed to John Burgoyne which he had secured, and for a moment wondered if it had any connection with the sudden departure of the army from the camp at Morristown. But in the haste of the departure the thought did not long remain in his mind, and even the project he had formed for searching for his missing friends he was speedily compelled to abandon.

The interest and excitement of the soldiers increased when it was soon learned that this time the direction in which the army was to move was not toward the Hudson, but to the southward, and that all haste consistent with the heat of the July days was to be used.

Rumors soon became prevalent that the great commander had received information that could not be doubted that Howe had embarked his entire army and was sailing for the Delaware, and that evidently he was planning to attack Philadelphia. Soldiers and officers alike were at a loss to understand what the British commander was trying to do. That he would depart from New York was not unlikely, in their minds, and there was not one who did not believe that his real purpose

was to move up the Hudson to meet and aid John Burgoyne, who at the very time was striving to make his way from the North. If once the two armies should be united, then there could be little doubt that the American colonies would be split into two parts, each unable to aid the other because of the strong barriers the British army in the centre would present; and then each part might be subdued separately by the British and at their comparative leisure. So the Americans believed the real purpose of the British to be, and so the British leaders themselves had believed.

Just why this plan was not adhered to is not definitely known. It may have been that Howe and Clinton firmly believed that General John Burgoyne, with his strong army, would be fully competent to take care of himself and would need no assistance from them. Some have thought the failure of Howe to move up the Hudson was due to the advice of the traitor Charles Lee, who had been Howe's prisoner in New York, and had been plotting and planning with him to throw the entire American army into his hands.

Certainly it is true that Washington could not bring himself to believe that Howe really

intended to attack Philadelphia and leave Burgoyne to fight out his campaign by himself, and continually the great leader was sending some of his men back to learn if word had been received of the return of the British fleet to New York, for Washington was firmly convinced that the British general was merely trying to lead him as far as possible from the Hudson, and then, when he had led him on until it would be well-nigh impossible for him to return, to sail back himself under some favoring wind and strive to move up the Hudson before Washington could know of his project.

The American general had left a force in Morristown, but with the most of his army he was soon moving across New Jersey. The British commander, as we now know, but as Washington did not fully understand at the time, had embarked with eighteen thousand of his troops on board two hundred and twenty-eight vessels, and had left Sir Henry Clinton in New York with a force of seven thousand men to garrison that city.

But General Washington still led his army to the southward, no word having been received from General Sullivan, who had been left at Morristown, of the return of the

British fleet, and his scouts were bringing him information that Howe had arrived at the mouth of the Delaware and then unexpectedly had set sail for the South.

Firmly convinced now that his enemy was really intent upon some expedition either in the neighborhood of Philadelphia or Wilmington, or farther south, the speed of the American army was increased. But during all the slow days of the long march not one word had Henry Miner received of the missing trapper or of Captain Martin.

At last, on Sunday morning, August 24th, 1777, General Washington, at the head of about ten thousand Continental troops, marched into Philadelphia, crossed the Schuylkill River and proceeded on his way southward.¹ Down Front Street and up Chestnut the army had marched, and been cheered or jeered by the crowds that had assembled.

Suddenly Henry Miner, as the army en-

¹ On August 23d, General Washington, in a letter to a friend, had written: "I expect this evening to encamp within five or six miles of Philadelphia. To-morrow morning it will move again, and I think to march it through the city without halting. I am induced to do this from the opinion of several of my officers and friends in Philadelphia that it may have some influence on the minds of the disaffected there and those who are dupes to their artifices and opinions."

tered Chestnut Street, had seen a face in the assembled crowd that had startled him. It certainly was that of John Lippard, he assured himself, and so convinced was he that when the army halted, he sought and obtained permission to return to Philadelphia for the night. On the following day he was to rejoin his company, marching from the town either with General Nash's brigade of North Carolina men or Colonel Proctor's regiment of artillery, both of which were known to be not far behind the main body of the troops.

CHAPTER XV

AN UNEXPECTED INTERVIEW

WHEN Henry Miner returned to Philadelphia he was thoroughly wearied by the long march which had been made, but the vision of the face he had for a moment seen in the crowd that had lined the streets when the troops had marched through the town, was still with him. That John Lippard should be in the old town was of itself well-nigh unaccountable; when last he had seen him the man had been fleeing from the great swamp near Morristown, and how he made his way in advance of the army and why he should show himself openly in the assembled crowd was certainly an unaccountable action on his part, and betokened either a recklessness or a confidence that was well-nigh unexplainable.

The young lieutenant was eager to see the man and for his own sake obtain either an explanation of his strange actions or turn him over to the proper authorities who, doubtless, would deal with him as he deserved, for Henry

was convinced that the man was playing a double part and that his presence in Philadelphia was an omen of ill.

So firmly was he convinced of this in his own mind that the first place he sought when he returned to the town was Chestnut Street, where he had for a moment seen the face of John Lippard in the midst of the assembled crowd.

As he walked along the street, with which he was somewhat familiar, he almost expected to find the man for whom he was searching in the very place where last he had been seen. Many people were still to be seen there, and the remarks he heard all bore directly upon the passing of the army. The excitement was still unabated, and it was evident that the purpose which General Washington had had in passing through the old town with his troops had not been without its fruits, for the impression it had produced was evident in the discussions which could be heard on every side. It is doubtful if there was a town in all the Colonies in which the presence of either army produced a stronger effect upon those who were wavering in their allegiance to King George or to the struggling Colonies.

But Henry Miner was so intent upon the

one purpose in his mind that he gave slight heed to the words he heard. It was one face alone for which he was searching and one man for whom he was looking as he walked along the street. Twice he proceeded up and down the street, but not a glimpse of John Lippard was he able to obtain. Several times he made inquiries of men whom he saw in the doorways of the buildings, but as he obtained no information from them, he soon decided that it was as unwise as it was useless for him to advertise his design in this manner. But after an hour had elapsed and he had not been able to obtain any light upon his search, he at last decided that he would no longer continue his efforts, but would go at once to the home of his aunt, who dwelt in the city, and in the early morning — perhaps before the coming of the troops that were soon to pass through the town — would return to the place where the army had encamped.

With this purpose in his mind, as it was by this time late in the evening, he abandoned his search for John Lippard and started toward the dwelling place of his aunt. He had gone a few blocks (or “squares” as the Philadelphia expression was) when he found that the streets were more quiet and fewer persons could be seen.

He was busied now with his own thoughts and gave slight attention to the people that were passing him. It almost seemed to him that he must have been deceived in the impression he had received that John Lippard had been seen at all. In such a crowd, it was more than likely that he had mistaken some one who resembled John Lippard for the man himself. If that should prove to be true, it would be some satisfaction in any event to know that at least he had been mistaken.

And yet, strive as he would, he could not banish from his mind the sight of the face he had seen. It had stood out so clearly in the line of people that it had been stamped upon his memory. That he himself had been seen he did not believe, although he had no means of verifying his conclusion. In the passing of such great numbers of men, however, it was hardly conceivable that one man should differ from another, for the passing ranks had been like the oncoming waves of the sea, or the falling of the flakes of snow in winter, "seen rather than distinguished." However, all that was impossible to determine now, and as he proceeded on his way the feeling of perplexity deepened until he was almost ready to assure himself that he had been mistaken

in it all and that the truth was that John Lippard was not within many miles of Philadelphia.

The people whom he met now were more scattered, and soon the street seemed to be deserted save for an occasional sound of some one far away. He was drawing near to the house he was seeking, and soon stopped in front of it.

The hour was late, at least late for the members of the family, who were accustomed to retire early; but to Henry's surprise he perceived a light shining from the windows of the rooms on the first floor. He ran eagerly up the steps and announced his presence loudly by the polished brass knocker on the door. He soon could hear the movements of some one within approaching the door. There was a brief delay, the words of a low conversation could be indistinctly heard, and then the door was opened and before him stood his aunt, holding a candlestick in her hands. Beside her there was a man, also standing, and as Henry gazed up in surprise, his salutation to his aunt was forgotten as he perceived that it was John Lippard himself who was before him.

For a brief moment the surprise of the two

men seemed to be equally keen. Neither spoke, nor did the young lieutenant even respond to the greeting of his aunt as she perceived who the late caller was.

"I've been looking for you, Jack Lippard," said Henry at last.

"Well, you've found me," replied the man in a low voice. "It seems to me that the last time I saw you, you were doing about the same thing."

"I've found you now."

"Yes, you've had better success this time." John Lippard was speaking quietly, and if he was alarmed over the apparently unexpected interview, he did not betray his feelings by voice or expression.

"Come on back into the house," said Henry quickly. "I want to" —

"Very sorry, Lieutenant," replied the man mockingly, "but it will be impossible for me to delay in your aunt's home longer."

"But I must see you," retorted Henry.

"You have seen me, you see me now, and you'll see me again. Of that I have no need to assure you." There was a sneer or threat implied in the man's words which Henry felt rather than heard.

"It'll be better for you to do as I say."

"Very well. I must obey the officers of our army, I suppose. I'll stay here if that is what you command me to do."

The unexpected change both in the manner and words of the man for a moment puzzled Henry, but quickly deciding to take advantage of the apparent willingness, he hastily entered the hallway and closed the door behind him.

"We were expecting you, Henry," said his aunt cordially, as she led the way into the living room.

"Expecting me?" demanded Henry. "I don't see how you could be expecting me when I did n't know myself that I was coming."

"Why, this man told us you were coming."

"You told them?" said Henry, turning sharply upon John Lippard.

"Yes, I told your aunt she might expect you. I did n't know you were coming, but as the army was to march through the town, and as you were in the lines, I naturally thought you'd report here."

"You did?" Henry looked in surprise at the man before him. Apparently he was calm and in no wise fearful of the interview. The

affair was becoming more and more puzzling. There certainly was something unexplained, and to Henry it seemed unexplainable, in the fact that John Lippard, after all that Henry had known of his ways and deeds, should be here where he now was and in no apparent fear.

-“I’ll get you something to eat, Henry,” said his aunt. “If I’d been sure just what time you’d come I’d have had everything ready for you, but this man could n’t tell us that. All he said was that you weré in town and probably would come here sometime to-night.”

“How did you know that, Jack?” demanded Henry.

John Lippard smiled, but did not reply until the woman had departed from the room, first having placed the candlestick on a low table. The light was dim, and John Lippard moved back until his face could not be clearly seen.

“You want to know how I came to be here?” he said in a low voice. “Well, I’ll tell you. I was looking for you.”

“How did you know I was in town?”

“I shan’t tell you. It’s enough for you to know I’m here.”

“You may tell some one else if you don’t tell me.”

The man laughed sneeringly as he said, "I fear neither you nor your threats. Perhaps you may recall what I said to you back in Morristown."

As Henry made no reply, he continued, "I have n't forgotten it, if you have. They used to tie a string around my little finger when I was a boy to help me to remember. But I've got some stripes on my back now that'll help me not to forget. Do you know how I got them, Henry?"

"You got 'them because you deserved them."

"Deserved them? I was n't doing a thing more than dozens of our men were doing, and you know it. No, I got them because a boy from the same colony and the same part of the country I came from wanted to show that he was a big gun in the army, and so he turned me over to the whip. I shan't forget it."

"There is n't any use in talking about that, Jack," began Henry, "you know as well as I do" —

"Better! I know it a great deal better than you do!" interrupted the young man bitterly.

"You know the way out of the swamp, too," said Henry, becoming angry.

"That's more than you do," and the man laughed sneeringly.

"What were you doing there in the swamp, any way?"

"I had the same question to ask of you."

"I'll tell you. When I read that note you had, I thought I'd like to be at the meeting."

"What note? What meeting?"

"The one you had the cipher for."

For a moment John Lippard was silent. It was too dark to enable Henry to perceive what the expression on his face was, but to Henry it seemed as if the very silence itself was shrilly eloquent.

"Then you read that note, did you?" inquired John Lippard at last.

"Yes."

"How did you do it?"

"Oh, that was not very hard. You know it was n't the only note of the kind in the Morristown camp."

Again there was a silence in the room. Henry was beginning to feel somewhat elated, for it now was becoming evident, or so he believed, that the man was at last beginning to realize that his position was a troublesome one. Had he been able, the young officer

would at once have turned him over to the authorities and left them to deal with him as he deserved. Of his treachery he himself entertained no doubts. The very boldness of the man, and the fact that he had entered his aunt's house angered the young officer, who nevertheless was aware that he was unable to deal with the man alone. How he was to secure him was a question he was considering, but no method had presented itself to him when the man spoke again.

"Henry Miner, you know I have no cause to care for you except in one way, and in that I'm thinkin' my feelin's are pretty warm,—almost as warm as my back was when those drummers and fifers were cutting it with their whips. But though I'm no friend to you, and I came here to your aunt's house to-night just because I wanted to lay my hands on you, I'm willing to call everything quits if you are."

"I don't know what you mean."

"You forget about the swamp and the cipher; and I'm thinkin' I may forget about the whipping-post."

Henry laughed but made no reply, and at that moment his aunt returned to the room. John Lippard at once declared that he could

remain no longer, and as he departed from the house Henry said to her, "I must follow him. I must know where he goes."

Despite her protest, he too departed soon after John Lippard, and promising to return soon, at once went out upon the street.

CHAPTER XVI

LIKE A THIEF IN THE NIGHT

THE light was dim, but Henry Miner was able to see a considerable distance up and down the street, and as he looked keenly in either direction his first thought was that there was no one to be seen. A light could be seen shining in the windows of some of the houses, but in others it already had disappeared, and it was evident that the inhabitants had sought their beds.

Far in the distance he perceived what he thought must be the figure of a man moving swiftly along the street, and as no other was within sight, he instantly began to run in pursuit, crossing over to the opposite side of the street, however, and endeavoring to run with the least possible noise, and yet exerting himself to the utmost in his effort to overtake the man in the distance.

As he sped forward he saw the man suddenly stop for a moment and glance behind him, and instantly Henry darted behind the

shadow of one of the great trees that grew beside the street. Whether or not he had been seen he could not determine, but his heart was beating rapidly as he peered cautiously forth at the man in the distance. In a brief time the man resumed his way and Henry instantly followed.

In this manner they both advanced for a brief time, and then the man in advance again halted and looked all about him. This time there was no sheltering tree near, but crouching near a high fence Henry stopped and waited for the man before him to indicate what his next movement would be. That it was John Lippard whom he was following he firmly believed, although he was not near enough to enable him to see clearly. And he was so eager to determine the place where the man was staying in the city and to learn who his friends were, that he was fully decided not to abandon his pursuit before he had at least made every effort to ascertain these facts.

Suddenly the man whom he was following turned into another street and disappeared from sight. Convinced now that his own movements could not be seen, Henry quickened his pace and began to run swiftly, and

as soon as he had arrived at the corner, instantly turned into the street where the man had gone.

But as he looked keenly before him he was not able to discover the presence of any one. To all appearances the street was deserted, and not a sound could be heard as he paused for a moment to listen intently.

Suddenly he perceived a man on the steps that led up from the street to one of the houses, and instantly concluding that this must be the one whom he was following, he started swiftly toward the place, which was not far in advance of him. As he drew near, however, he saw the man quietly open the door and enter the house. The door was instantly closed, and as Henry quickly ran forward he discovered that there was nothing to distinguish the place from the other buildings in the row, all of which seemed to be built upon exactly the same plan.

Nevertheless, Henry was convinced that the house before which he was standing was the one into which the man had gone. But he was, for a brief time, thoroughly puzzled to know just what was best for him to do. A multitude of questions unthought of before crowded upon him. How could he be

certain that the man whom he had been following and who had certainly gone into the house was really John Lippard? He had at no time been close enough to him to enable him to ascertain that, and yet no one else had been seen upon the street since he had left the home of his aunt. What should he next do? No light could be seen from any of the windows, and to arouse the inmates might be only to increase his troubles. He had not asked John all the questions he had intended to put to him, and foremost among these had been his desire to learn if anything had been heard of Hugh or Captain Martin. Not that he believed that John Lippard would tell him directly, even if he knew, but Henry thought that he would be able to judge something from the man's actions when the questions were asked. Besides, as he firmly believed that the man was having double dealings of some kind and was a serious menace to the welfare of the little army, he was eager to follow him up and be able to report just where he was likely to be found in the city if his presence was desired.

His first thought, now that he had found the house into which John Lippard had gone, was in some way to mark it so that he could

readily find it again. Suddenly it occurred to him that as John Lippard had opened the door without the use of a key he might do the same thing. He was eager to see him and ask more questions, and the explanation of his presence in the house, if it was demanded, might readily be given by declaring that he was in search of John Lippard himself.

Without hesitating a moment he went up the steps, and trying the latch found that it readily yielded. The door swung silently open and he stepped inside, carefully closing the door behind him.

He found himself now in the midst of a darkness which for a time his eyes were unable to penetrate. He stood with his back against the door, his heart beating furiously, listening intently and peering before him as if he was almost expecting the man he was seeking to appear.

In a brief time he became somewhat accustomed to the darkness and was able to make out that he was in a large hallway, and that a few yards before him was a stairway. Cautiously he moved forward to the lowest of the steps and again stopped and listened intently. It was certainly a unique position in which he found himself, and the excitement which pos-

sessed him became intense. But having advanced thus far, he was not minded to retreat until he had at least made one more effort to discover whether or not John Lippard was indeed within the house.

Cautiously he stepped upon the stairway, and slowly and carefully grasping the rail as he proceeded, moved upward until he rested upon the fourth step, and there he again paused and looked up into the open space above him. From a room in the third floor he could see a faint light now shining which indicated not only that some one was there, but that the door into the room was not closed. Filled with a new excitement he carefully and slowly climbed the stairs, frequently stopping to listen and striving to quiet the furious beating of his own heart.

When he had gained the head of the stairway he was enabled to perceive that there was a second hall, and at the farther end of it was another stairway that led to the floor above that where he was standing. To gain it he must pass along the hall, which was narrower than the one below, and from which he could see that several rooms opened, and the door of one even then was wide open. This he must pass, and if the room was occupied, it

would be exceedingly difficult not to arouse the attention of those who might be within, for he had already discovered that the floor creaked somewhat beneath his feet.

Still, the attempt must be made if he was to carry out his plan. The light was still shining from the open door on the floor above him, and he knew that conditions there had not changed. Stealthily and cautiously he advanced, grasping the rail with one hand and lifting his feet with the utmost care.

In this way he proceeded until he was directly opposite the open door, where he was aware the most severe test would occur until he had gained the hallway above him. His breathing now was difficult, and his heart somehow seemed to have risen from its normal place until it almost choked him. And worst of all, the floor seemed almost like a thing alive, and was doing its utmost to warn the inmates of the house that a stranger was passing over it, for, despite his efforts, it creaked and groaned every time he moved.

Suddenly Henry Miner turned, and was about to dash down the stairway as the voices of persons within the room were heard, but restraining his impulse by a great effort, he stood clutching the rail and listening as

if for his life. Even then it flashed upon him what a predicament it was for a young lieutenant of the Continental army to find himself in. To be creeping into men's houses like a thief in the night! And what a lame explanation it would be when he should be compelled to say that he was where he was because he was searching for a man whom he knew!

But even his fears were not able to prevent him from hearing what was being said. It was a woman who was speaking, and the voice that replied was that of a man who evidently was sleepy and not strongly disposed to share in the feelings of his companion.

"I tell thee, Simeon," the woman was saying, "the cat *is* in the house."

"Nay, nay," the man replied drowsily.

"But I tell thee it is!"

"Na-ay," murmured the man.

"Simeon, wilt thou get up, or must I?"

There was no response to the question, and for a moment Henry breathed more freely, but it was only for a moment, for again the woman spoke.

"Simeon," she demanded, "didst thou lock the door after the man came in?"

"Na-a-y," drawled the sleepy man.

“Then the door is open and the cat *is* in the house.”

Henry grimly thought of his own boyhood days and of the accomplishment which he then had boasted of being able to mimic the cries and calls of the cat so perfectly that even the veteran tabbies had been deceived. It had been the delight of his boyish heart to send forth the call or the challenge when he had been passing some house where he had seen a cat sleeping peacefully in the sunlight which flooded the piazza or doorstep, and the never failing response had been instantaneous. Again and again his friends had besought him to show his powers, and the exhibitions he had given had been a frequent source of amusement among the girls and boys of the region in which he had had his home.

In the midst of his present excitement the recollection of these things flashed into his mind, and suddenly he decided to test his powers again. It might be possible for him in this way to cause the two people in the room to go down the stairs, and in that event he would be permitted to pass without molestation to the room above.

“Simeon ! Simeon ! I tell thee the cat *is* in the house !” repeated the woman sharply.

“Nay! Nay, Elizabeth! Leave me in peace.”

“I will not leave thee in peace.”

“Ah-h-h,” groaned the man.

“Simeon, dost thou hear me?”

“Yea, verily.”

“Art thou refusing to do as I bid thee?”

“Na-ay.”

“Wilt thou get up, Simeon, or must I?”

“I tell thee, Elizabeth, the cat is not in the house,” said the man, at last evidently wide awake.

“Then I must leave thee and do thy work myself.”

“But why, Elizabeth? There is no cat, I tell thee” —

Suddenly from the hall came the plaintive wail as of a cat in distress. “Meow! Meow-w!” came the cry, long drawn out, and then it was followed by several sharp, short calls, as if the feline patience was well-nigh exhausted.

“There! What did I tell thee, Simeon?” came from within the room. “Now thou knowest what I said to thee.”

Despite the triumphant tone, Henry was far more interested in the problem of his own safety than he was in the controversy,

and leaning over the rail he emitted several more calls, making them sound as if they rose from the stairway below, and then turned and endeavored to move quickly along the hall toward the end, away from the room in which the two people were, thinking that in the confusion any slight noise he might make would be ignored in the search for the cat in the hall below.

As he came to the end he quickly perceived that there was no place there where he might conceal himself, and in desperation he started directly up the stairway that led to the third floor.

To his consternation, the man in the room below appeared in the doorway, holding a lighted candle in his hands, the beams of which fell full upon the young lieutenant crouching upon the stairs.

"Humph," remarked the man as he perceived Henry, "this is the cat, is it? What art thou doing there, my friend?"

"Nothing," replied Henry foolishly—"I'm just looking for a man."

Apparently the Quaker was not alarmed at the discovery of the stranger within his house, for he quietly closed the door into the room behind him, and then coming to the foot of



HAROLD MATTHEWS BRETT

"WHAT ART THOU DOING THERE, MY FRIEND?"

the stairway, to which Henry had already returned, he said, "Who is the man whom you are seeking?"

"Who is here?" replied Henry, hardly aware of what he was saying.

"I will call the captain, and thou canst explain to him." Before Henry could reply the man called, "Captain Martin! Here is a man seeking for thee!"

Hardly able to trust the evidence of his own ears, Henry stood in the hallway waiting for the unexpected summons of the Quaker to be answered.

CHAPTER XVII

A TALK IN THE NIGHT

IN a brief time Captain Martin himself appeared at the head of the stairway, holding a lighted candle in his hand, and peering down at the man before him. Despite his mild manner and peaceable words the Quaker had taken his stand in the narrow hallway, a fact which Henry had been quick to perceive, and the purpose of which he clearly understood as being to prevent his escape if he should try to flee from the building. That it was Captain Martin who was above him he was convinced as soon as he appeared.

“Does some one want me?” inquired the captain sharply, unable to perceive who it was that was standing on the stairway.

“This man says he would speak to thee,” replied the Quaker.

“Who is it?”

“One whom you know,” responded Henry quickly.

“But who is it, and what are you doing here at this time of night?”

"It's Henry Miner, and if you'll let me come up, I'll tell you all about it," said the young lieutenant.

"Come right up."

"It is all right, then?" inquired the Quaker dubiously.

"It's all right, Friend Simeon," responded the captain. "You may go back to bed and rest in peace. I'll let the young man out of the house myself, and you'd better let me bar the door this time."

"Nay" — began the Quaker, when he was interrupted by a sharp voice close behind him which was speaking through the partly open doorway. "Simeon," it said, "didst thou put out the cat?"

"I have seen no cat."

"There is n't any," said Henry quickly as he turned to go up the stairway. "I made the noise you heard. There was n't any cat there."

Without delaying to discuss the matter further, he at once mounted the steps, but the last words he heard from the voices below were "cat" and "door." His interest in meeting his friend, however, was much keener than in the discussion, and as he grasped the outstretched hand of Captain Martin and

followed him into his room, he no longer heard the sounds from below the stairs.

Captain Martin closed and bolted the door of his room, and then turning about so that he stood facing his young friend, he said, "This beats me, Lieutenant! How does it happen that you are here? Have you news for me?"

Thus bidden, Henry briefly related the story of his experiences of the night, and described how he had followed John Lippard along the streets and finally had returned to enter the very house into which the man had gone. "And he's somewhere in this very house at this minute," he said as he brought his story to an end.

The light had been too dim to enable him to see the expressions of surprise and amusement and even chagrin that alternately had appeared on the captain's face while he had been speaking, and doubtless his own confusion would have been increased if he had seen them.

For a moment the captain was silent when Henry's story was told, and then he said quietly, "Be seated, Lieutenant. There is more in this than you know. In the first place, Jack Lippard *is* in this very house and at

this moment is asleep in the room next to mine."

"I knew it! I knew he was here!" exclaimed Henry exultantly.

"He came here because I arranged for his coming. He has been here for two nights now."

"He has?"

"Yes. He told me about the chase you had in the swamp."

"He did?" exclaimed the young lieutenant, completely mystified. "Did he tell you where Hugh was, too?"

"No," said the captain, quietly. "Is n't Hugh with you?"

"I have n't seen or heard of Hugh since we were in the swamp."

"That's strange. I don't understand it. However," he added lightly, "Hugh will give a good account of himself, and you'll hear from him soon. Were you disappointed that I did not come back to the swamp as I promised?"

"Yes, sir."

"I can't explain to you now why I did n't come, but there were good reasons. Did you ever hear what was in that letter you took to the general?"

"No, sir. I did n't know that you knew I took any letter."

"It was a message from General Howe," said Captain Martin, ignoring the implied question in Henry's words, "at least that was what it appeared to be. It was a letter to John Burgoyne in which he declared that he was about to sail for Boston. But General Washington is not an easy man to hoodwink."

"I don't see" — began Henry.

"No, but you will. The very manner in which the letter was taken and brought to Morristown made the General suspicious, and as he also had his own scouts at work he was very soon confirmed in his opinion that Howe had made use of this letter to try to mislead him. Such tricks are not unknown, as you yourself are aware."

"Is it known where Howe is now?"

"Yes; that is, in a general way it is known. He was with his fleet down here at the mouth of the Delaware, and every one thought he was planning to come up the river and attack Philadelphia. There was really nothing to prevent him if that had been his plan, but the first thing we knew he had left the Delaware and sailed away for the south. That puzzled us still more, for it had n't been believed by

any of our men that Howe really was planning to get very far away from New York. You see, every man has believed that the red-coats sooner or later would go up the Hudson to the aid of John Burgoyne. That is what we would have done and what it seems to me any reasonable man would expect Howe to do. But it's a fact that he has brought a great fleet and about eighteen thousand of his men down here and now he has gone on to the south."

"Where?"

"That no man knows. Where would he be most likely to go?"

"Charleston, I should think."

"Good! That's just what we all think; that is, if he has really gone south, which I myself very much doubt."

"I thought you said it was known that he had sailed for the south."

"It's known that he started in that direction. Personally, I don't believe he will go very far."

"You think he'll come back here?"

"Perhaps; or he may try to get back to New York before we can get across New Jersey again. I can't understand what it is he wants here, any way."

"It may be that he wants Philadelphia," suggested Henry.

"Philadelphia is a good town; but why at this time he should want to get it I cannot understand. And he must know, too, that if he is really planning to strike Charleston he can't draw our army on as far south as that. It is simply impossible."

"What will our army do now?"

"It'll push on for a little way, just far enough to make sure that the redcoats have really gone south, or try to head them off if they should make a landing, and then — no one knows what the next move will be."

"Are you going with the army?"

"Certainly. Why do you ask such a question as that?"

"I did n't know. I found you here."

"So you did, but that does n't mean you'd find me here always. To-morrow morning, when the other troops pass through the town, I am planning to join them."

"So am I."

"We may go on together in that event," said the captain kindly.

"Will Jack Lippard go, too?"

"'Sufficient unto the day,'" laughed the captain. "Don't borrow trouble for the mor-

row. It may be that not one of us will go. That's something no man knows."

"I don't understand just what you've been doing here, Captain Martin."

"I don't think any one does."

"Do these Quakers know you're in the army? Of course they do," he added quickly, "if you wear your uniform."

"And I do wear it, you may be certain of that. Did n't you hear my friend Simeon refer to me as 'Captain' Martin?"

"I did."

"There are some things connected with my stay here which he does n't know, nor even his good wife, either, although she is willing to be told all about it. There are some things, too, which you don't know, and some which I don't know myself. But it's important, or I should n't be here."

"I have no question as to that. Am I to see Jack Lippard before I go back to my aunt's?"

"Do you desire to see him?"

"Not for myself. If you know if it's all right, if" —

"You can safely leave him with me, at least for the present."

"I shall do as you say," assented Henry,

although his confusion was so apparent that the captain smiled as he perceived it.

As Henry rose to depart, the captain suggested that he should go with him to the door of the hall below, a suggestion which Henry quickly declined. Captain Martin explained that the principles of the peaceful dwellers in the house forbade them to fasten the front door even in times of war, and that if it was desirable to see him again before morning, he might return at any time and find no difficulty in being admitted into the house.

Mystified by the events of the night and wearied by the long march of the day, Henry bade the captain good-night, assuring him that he was able to make his exit from the house without causing his friend to go through the formality of following him to the door, and started down the stairway. As he came again into the narrow hallway and was about to pass the door of the room from which the conversation had proceeded between the Friend and his wife, he was startled to hear again, "There! Simeon, I tell thee the cat is in the house."

"Na-a-y," drawled Simeon sleepily.

In spite of his feeling of weariness, a mo-

mentary mischievous impulse seized upon Henry, and he emitted several of his most expressive "cat calls."

"Meaow! meaow!" sounded plaintively in the hall, and then these sounds were followed by several sharp and quick cries, as if the cat in question was becoming weary of the long neglect of its quondam friends. "Me-aow! Me-aow-aow!" sounded sharply in the darkness.

Henry waited for a moment and then from the doorway of Simeon's room he heard the words of the Quakeress, "Co-o-me he-ere. Come! Did Simeon abuse thee?"

Ashamed of himself for his boyish and undignified behavior, nevertheless Henry was seized with a strong desire to laugh at the success of his prank. It was a reaction from the excessive strain through which he had been passing, and as he hastened to the door which opened into the street, the last words he heard from the floor above him were, "Poor little beastie! I tell thee, Simeon, the cat" — But Henry waited to hear no more. He hastened out upon the street, and soon returned to the house of his aunt.

On the following day the young lieutenant joined the ranks of the North Carolina troops

as they passed through Philadelphia on their way to join the main body of the army. The excitement in the old town was great amongst some of the people; but others, and they were not a few, were by no means expressing confidence or enthusiasm, and they either watched the ranks of the hardy men with indifference or with ill-concealed dislike.

Captain Martin joined the troops when Henry did, as did also John Lippard, who saluted the young lieutenant with a smile which turned to a sneer when the captain's back was turned. Puzzled as Henry was by the conflicting actions of the men, he had but little time to give heed to such thoughts, for the troops were soon in motion and were moving swiftly on their way to join the main body. Rumors of what the redcoats were doing or were about to do, were frequent amongst the men; but no one appeared to have any definite or trustworthy information.

At last, however, it became known that the British had gone to the head of the Chesapeake Bay, and Washington hastened with his army as far as Wilmington and there halted to meet the enemy. The commander had his quarters within the town, while the most of the army was encamped just outside.

Here it was learned that Howe had written and caused to be scattered among the people of the region another of his famous amnesty proclamations ; but as his offers and threats were followed by a similar proclamation by Washington, no very great harm was done.

But both armies now began to move, and at last when the British had arrived at the village of Kennett Square, a clash of arms came that deeply concerned the men whose fortunes have been followed in this story.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE BATTLE OF THE BRANDYWINE

THERE was great excitement now in the ranks of the American army when it was known that an engagement of some kind was certain to be had. Months had elapsed since the hardy patriots had stood before the well-trained and well-equipped forces of King George, and there were many new men in the ranks who had had no experience of the kind they were about to undergo.

In Washington's army there were about eleven thousand men, while in the force of the redcoats there were at least eighteen thousand, and not only did Howe's army outnumber that of Washington, but in it were many trained men who were supplied with the best equipment that could be had, and their leaders were men of experience and ability.

Doubtless the great American commander was fully aware of all the disadvantages which were his, but the time had arrived when he was convinced that something must be at-

tempted. The people, who for the most part were clamoring for action by their army, were loud in their complaints of the delays which Washington had intentionally made. Even Congress was becoming insistent that a "blow" should be struck. Although General Washington and the best of his generals were fully aware of the unreasonableness of the clamor, and if that had been the only problem they had had to face, without doubt they would have ignored the demands and continued the policy which they were carefully pursuing, there were other elements, however, which at last caused them to decide to hazard a battle.

One of these was the desire to prevent the British army from moving upon Philadelphia, which town was inadequately defended and would easily fall into their hands; and the other and greater cause was the purpose to delay Howe's army and at least hold it as long as was possible where it then was and so prevent it from going to the help of John Burgoyne in the North, who, as Washington already knew, was having troubles of his own, and if his allies could only be prevented from going up the Hudson to his aid, might not be able to maintain his place in front of the patriot

army, which was daily increasing in numbers and in spirit and determination. All of these things are well known now, but in 1777 only the few leaders understood the exact condition of affairs, and the burdens they were bearing must have been much more heavy because of that very fact.

Doubtless the heart of the great leader was heavy within him as he prepared to give battle to his foe, but nevertheless he proceeded with his plans cautiously, using the utmost care in the selection of his ground and in the division and arrangement of his little army.

Brandywine Creek, a large stream, flowed directly across the line of march which Howe must follow on his way to Philadelphia. This stream was swift and turbulent in places, but there were also numerous fords in it by which the army might cross. Of these fords, that which was known as Chadd's Ford was the one which Washington thought Howe would be most likely to use, and as the Brandywine just below this place was swift and boisterous, he decided to chance the battle here.

Just behind Chadd's Ford and directly across the country road Washington stationed the centre of his own army, looking upon these troops as being, perhaps, the most reliable

of all his men, and to make assurance doubly sure he also stationed there a corps of his artillery under the command of Mad Anthony Wayne, of whose zeal he was already well assured, and then placed General Nathanael Greene, one of his most trustworthy men, with a reserve division in the rear.

Along the cliffs of the Brandywine below Chadd's Ford, where the waters rushed swiftly past, the Pennsylvania militia, under the command of General Armstrong (and here both Henry Miner and many of his former neighbors were to be found) were stationed, for it was deemed wise to give the men who lacked somewhat in experience the position which was the least likely to be attacked.

Sturdy General Sullivan with the right wing, which extended for nearly two miles, was to guard that part, and it was feared, and indeed was expected, that this place would be the most difficult to hold. The country was rough and uneven, and the lines extended far back, even into the woods.

The position in which Washington had stationed his army was exceedingly strong, and if his men had been trained or had been as well equipped as the advancing redcoats, it is possible that they might have successfully

faced the army of Howe. But in its last analysis it is the man in the ranks who counts for more, and when men of the same nationality, with similar traditions and standards of life, with the same rugged spirit of determination in all, meet, then it is that training, experience, and equipment form the elements which decide the struggle. And so General Washington found it in the battle of the Brandywine.

It was not long after the position which has been described had been taken before the British army began its movements. The Hessian general, Knyphausen, with his right wing began to fire and strive to hold Washington's attention to the men at Chadd's Ford directly before him. While this was being done, Lord Cornwallis, the most energetic and active of all the generals whom the British sent to America, took the left wing of the army and marched rapidly up the old Lancaster road, crossed the forks of the Brandywine and then turned to the south, marching toward the Birmingham meeting-house. His plan was to gain the rear of the division which Sullivan commanded and there strike a blow, which he hoped would scatter and shatter the right wing of the American army, just as he

had succeeded in doing in the terrible battle of Long Island, more than a year before this time.

This move was not unexpected by Washington, and for a time he seriously thought of leading the forces at Chadd's Ford directly across the stream and striving to break the line of the British in front of him there. But two facts faced him which he could not ignore. One was that General Knyphausen had a great advantage in the number of his men and that they would be able to fight on land while his own troops were wading across the stream ; and the other was that conflicting reports were brought him of the movements of Cornwallis. One courier would declare that the British general was striving to turn Sullivan's flank, but he in turn would be followed by another courier who was just as positive that Cornwallis was not attempting any such feat. When at last he did receive positive information as to the actions of Lord Cornwallis, that doughty leader was already near the Birmingham meeting-house, and it was too late to make any attempt to cross the stream.

Swiftly General Washington, as soon as he learned of the whereabouts of Cornwallis,

sent word to Sullivan to advance toward the meeting-house, there form a new front, and be prepared to beat back the advancing red-coats.

General Sullivan, brave and trusty man though he was, was able to carry out the directions only in part, owing to the lack of discipline among the men he commanded; but what was lacking in order was in part made up by the bravery and determination of his rugged followers. A stand was made and the most of the hard fighting of the battle of the Brandywine occurred there near the meeting-house, between the divisions commanded by Sullivan and Cornwallis.

For hours the desperate contest continued. The day was warm, and the heat, added to the excitement under which the men were laboring, soon caused them to present an appearance which none that saw it ever forgot. Perspiration rolled in streams down the faces of the Continentals, smoke-begrimed, stained with dust and powder, shouting, shooting; it hardly seemed to be human beings that were contending with one another. The clouds of smoke slowly rose and rolled back along the road and covered the trees in the woods. The roar of the guns and the shouts and cries of

the men were almost unbroken. Sullivan's followers were doing heroic service, but the result was not long left in doubt.

Slowly and yet steadily the overwhelming numbers of Cornwallis pushed the struggling Americans backward. It was inch by inch that they yielded at first; but lack of order, want of ammunition, and the vigor of the attack at last began to tell severely.

As the men of Sullivan fell back and soon began to move more rapidly, it became evident that if Cornwallis followed up his advantage — and all knew that he was a man who seldom permitted an advantage to be lost — the little American army would be split into two parts. Doubtless this was what Howe was most hopeful of doing and what Washington most feared, and in order to prevent such a catastrophe it was speedily decided that the centre should be withdrawn from Chadd's Ford and should retreat toward Chester. This retreat was led by General Greene, and is looked upon as one of the most masterly deeds of his entire career.

As soon as Greene had withdrawn his men from Chadd's Ford, there was nothing to prevent General Knyphausen from coming and attacking Mad Anthony Wayne's force,

which was so small that it was confidently believed by the British that it could be captured. As Knyphausen began his movement he was aided by a part of the forces of Cornwallis that abandoned the pursuit of Sullivan and moved toward the rear of the place which Mad Anthony held.

But neither Wayne nor Armstrong was to be caught easily, and as soon as it was known what the purpose of the enemy was, both men began to withdraw their forces and move to join the rest of the army, which was headed for Chester.

So the famous battle at last was ended and the Americans had again been defeated. A thousand of the men who had entered the fight were not again to have any part in the struggle for liberty and independence ; but the losses of the redcoats were even greater. Afterwards, at Germantown, in the rolls of the British which were there taken, it was learned that more than a thousand men had fallen on their side in the battle.

To-day the wonder is not that the Americans lost so many, but that so many survived. Outnumbered as they were, poorly equipped, and without training or experience, we know that it was a brave stand they made ; and

had it not been for the clear insight of their leaders the little army might well have been annihilated.

The report of the defeat soon was spread abroad, and the fear and consternation in Philadelphia were great. Many people fled from the city, even Congress with unseemly haste "adjourned" to Lancaster, the Whigs were downcast and the Tories correspondingly elated.

If Howe had acted promptly and with energy after the battle, in following up the advantage he had won, we cannot tell to-day what he might have accomplished. But whatever excellent qualities of mind he possessed, energy certainly was not to be counted among the number. So he had failed after his great victory in the preceding year on Long Island, and so he failed here near Philadelphia. The American army, although defeated, was still intact, and apparently its leaders were as determined as they had been when the struggle first began.

It was at this time that Washington received word of the victory which had been won at Bennington and also of the flight of Colonel Barry St. Leger's army from the valley of the Mohawk. The news was certainly

cheering to the great commander, and his greatness nowhere appears more clearly than in the movements that followed. Assured now that John Burgoyne was certainly defeated if Howe's army could only be held where it was and prevented from going to his aid, he bent all his energies toward the accomplishment of that task. He himself might be defeated, — the praises of Gates might be heard on every side ; but ignoring all the personal effect upon himself and eager only to gain that which would be of the greatest benefit to his struggling country, he apparently had no thought of himself and gave no heed to his own fame or name. Every effort was directed toward delaying, hindering, holding General Howe where he then was.

General Washington had been clothed almost with the power of a dictator by the frightened Congress before it fled to Lancaster, and these powers he now used in striving to keep his opponent near Philadelphia until he could learn of the decisive results around Saratoga. So well did he succeed that for the march of twenty-six miles to Philadelphia, General Howe was compelled to consume two entire weeks, but at the end of that time he had made his headquarters in Germantown

and Lord Cornwallis had led the way into Philadelphia, entering the city with his bands playing the most stirring music and his flags and banners flying, while the fine array of the redcoats added to the impression created by the victorious army.

Meanwhile, the experiences of Henry Miner had been of a character that had greatly stirred that young officer, and the part he had taken in the struggle belongs more nearly to the course of this story.

CHAPTER XIX

BETWEEN THE LINES

IN the midst of the confusion and the roar of the guns Lieutenant Henry Miner had held his place among the militia, who were, as we know, under the command of General Armstrong. What his feelings were he did not fully realize at the time, nor could he afterwards clearly describe them. The most that he knew was that he was in no worse condition than were the majority of the men about him, who for the most part were untried and inexperienced, and the prevailing excitement and fear were therefore no source of surprise.

When at last Sullivan's line was broken and the word for a retreat was given, it is safe to affirm that not many of the raw militiamen who composed the right wing regretted that they were to leave the field of battle. They were by no means cowardly, and the stand they had made was to their credit and honor; but trained as they had been to the belief that the soldiers of the British king

were the best in all the world, and aware as they also were of the success which they had already won in many of their engagements in the New World, the surprise is not that at last they left the battlefield, but that they held their ground so long and so well.

Besides, the veteran troops in the Continental army, outnumbered and outclassed, had been ordered to withdraw, and for the militia there was nothing but words of praise that they had not become demoralized and broken long before the final order was given. As it was, the army had shown the redcoats that it was not to be despised and that it was animated by a spirit of determination that was by no means crushed. The larger army of the British was at least checked in its course, if not defeated, and doubtless Washington, who must have had no expectation of victory, was well content with what had been accomplished.

The complaints of the people and the glamour which soon afterward rested upon the incompetent Gates, who was given credit for a victory over John Burgoyne, which was won as much, or more, in spite of him as it was because of him, aroused a desire on the part of some of the American leaders to have Washington give place to Gates as the commander of

the American forces. The manner in which Washington bore himself in the midst of all this carping is one of the clearest indications of his character, as well as one of the best tests of his manhood.

When the battle of the Brandywine had been lost and the little army of the Colonies was in full retreat toward Chester, then it was that Henry Miner began to realize fully what had occurred. Even the feeling of weariness, which had come as the natural reaction to the excitement of the battle, in a measure was swallowed up in an intense desire to do something. What it was he wanted to do, or when or where, he could not describe, but he was eager now to engage in some action that would bar the progress of the soldiers in the other army.

But there was no opportunity for action of any kind save that of the monotonous, disheartening retreat. Steadily, monotonously, swiftly the little army held to its way and at last encamped at Chester. Mad Anthony Wayne with about fifteen hundred men had been left behind by Washington to annoy the British troops that were encamped near Tredyffrin church and to cut off such supplies or baggage trains as he might be able.

It was not long after the Americans had halted on this retreat and gone into camp, when Henry Miner, busied among his men, was startled by the unexpected appearance of the trapper Hugh. Not a word had he heard of his friend since the adventure in the swamp near Morristown, and whether or not he had been able to escape he had not known.

His eagerness was therefore the keener, when beholding his friend before him, he stretched forth his hand and exclaimed, "Why, Hugh, you're the last man I was looking for. I did n't know but you were in the mud still."

"You did n't stay very long to find out," said Hugh quietly.

"Stay? Why, man, we could n't stay for anything. We had to" —

"Yes, yes. I know. I understand," interrupted Hugh quickly.

"Where were you? How did you get out? Where did you join us?"

"Hear the boy!" exclaimed Hugh delightedly. It was evident that whatever feelings of chagrin he had cherished at the uncere- monious departure of his young friend from Morristown, his delight over the present meet- ing had speedily banished them. His eyes

were shining and his hand trembled as he had grasped that of the young lieutenant.

"When did you come, Hugh?" again demanded Henry.

"Just now."

"How did you get here?"

"It's a long story, lad — I mean Lieutenant, and I can't tell you about it now. I've had a good time of it trying to look you up. Some other time I'll tell you all about it, and I've a notion you'll be interested, too. It's a great time I've had, take it all together."

"You must have had, Hugh."

"I did," said the trapper solemnly. "I hear we lost a thousand men over here by the Brandywine."

"We did," said Henry quietly, "and we're not done with it yet."

"So I fear. So I fear."

"What are you going to do now, Hugh?"

"Goin' to work. I want to do my share."

"I'm sure of that."

"But I've something else to do now. I can't stay in the camp."

"Why not? I don't understand."

"I've a message for Captain Martin."

"Is it important?"

"It is that."

"But he is n't here."

"Where is he, then?"

"He's with Mad Anthony, of course. You would n't expect him to be anywhere else, would you?"

"Can't say that I should. But where's he?"

"Who? General Wayne?"

"That's the man. Where he is, there, I'm thinkin', I'll find the captain."

"There is n't any doubt about that," said Henry thoughtfully. "Is your message important? Can't it wait till the army all gets together again?"

"No, sir. It ought to be in his hands now, this very minute."

"But he is n't here."

"Then I must go where he is."

The young lieutenant was silent for a moment before he replied. At last he said thoughtfully, "You'd better go to the colonel, Hugh. Tell him all you can about it, and if he thinks it's important enough, perhaps he'll send you there. And maybe he'll want me to go with you. Two are better than one, and now that I've got you back, Hugh, I don't want to lose sight of you again."

"Right, lad — I mean Lieutenant," said

Hugh, "I'll fix that part of it if it can be done. Where'll I find the colonel?"

Henry gave him directions as to the whereabouts of the officer in question, and as soon as Hugh departed at once busied himself again in the task to which he had been assigned. Guards had been doubled, and every precaution was being taken to guard against a surprise. A measure of confidence had been restored among the men by this time, and it was the purpose of the leaders to do all in their power to strengthen this feeling, for they clearly understood that still greater demands were to be made upon their followers within the immediate future.

It was late when Hugh returned, but Henry was able to perceive from the expression of his face that he had news of importance to relate. "Well, Hugh, what is it?" he demanded as the trapper approached.

"I've fixed it."

"Fixed what?"

"That we'll go to Captain Martin and start right away."

"Am I to go?"

"That's what you are, lad — I mean Lieutenant!"

"Did the colonel say so?"

“ Yes, he did.”

“ You know where Captain Martin is ? ”

“ The colonel told me.”

“ Is it near here ? ” inquired Henry in a lower tone.

“ ’T is n’t far from here.”

“ And the colonel wants us to go ? ”

“ That ’s what I said.”

“ When do we go ? ”

“ Now ; and the sooner the better.”

Perceiving that his friend was deeply in earnest, Henry at once made his hasty preparations to depart, and within a half hour the two men were on the road that led toward the spot they were seeking. That General Wayne was in hiding and was striving to keep his whereabouts unknown, Henry clearly understood. The directions given him had been to go with Hugh to a place indicated near an old tavern on the road, and by giving a signal there they would be met by an old man who would lead them to the hiding-place of the men they were seeking. The utmost secrecy was to be observed on the way, and every precaution taken to avoid meeting any men, for it was known that bands of the redcoats were busy in the region between the two armies, and that the Tories, or at least the most bitter of

them, were taking advantage of the opportunity now afforded to keep the British informed as to the movements of the Continentals.

It was dark when Henry and his companion set forth on their way, although they had no difficulty in following the road. The outermost sentries were quickly passed, and soon they found themselves on the highway, or turnpike, along which they were to go until they should arrive at the place where the waiting man was to be found.

As they moved swiftly forward on their way not a sound was heard to indicate the presence in the region of the contending armies. Even the lonely houses seemed to be doubly desolate, for not a light could be seen shining from the windows of any, and it was evident that the inmates had fled for security to the regions beyond.

It was, therefore, with a feeling of surprise, that as Henry and Hugh drew near The Spread Eagle, a tavern on the roadside, they perceived that it was occupied, and lights were plainly to be seen in all the lower windows of the house.

"Stop there, Lieutenant?" inquired the trapper in a low voice.

"Not unless we have to," responded Henry.

“Hark! What’s that?” he suddenly added, as the sound of approaching horsemen was distinctly heard.

The two men instantly halted and soon could perceive two men on horseback swiftly approaching. The lieutenant and his companion instantly darted into the woods beside the road, waiting for the men to pass, but to their surprise the horsemen drew rein as they approached the tavern, and soon both dismounted, tied their horses to the posts in front of the house, and then together entered the lower room.

“Who was it, Hugh?” demanded Henry in a low voice.

“Can’t say.”

“Strange. They seemed to be sure of the greeting they’d have, for they did n’t wait to find out who was inside the tavern.”

“I think I can find out who they are if ye really want to know.”

“How’ll you do it?”

“I can creep up and get a peep through the window.”

“Do it, Hugh!” said Henry eagerly. “We ought to know more about them.”

“Here I go, then, lad. You stay right here and I’ll come back pretty soon and report.”

Hugh at once departed from the place, and moving cautiously, yet rapidly, along the roadside, and keeping well within the shadows of the bushes and trees, began to make his way toward the tavern, which was not more than fifty yards distant. Henry watched him as long as he could be seen, but the trapper soon passed out of his sight, and the young officer remained, anxiously awaiting the return of his friend.

At last he could see Hugh again as he stepped forth into the open space, in the midst of which the tavern stood. He was moving slowly and crouching low, his very attitude such as to arouse the suspicion of any one who might chance to see him. Not a sound had come from the tavern, and had it not been for the horses which still were standing in front of the building, it would be difficult to believe that any men were within. Hugh was close to the building now, and Henry could make out his form as he stood a little back from the window.

Suddenly the door in front was opened, two men rushed forth, and with a shout started in pursuit of the trapper, who had turned and was running swiftly in the direction of the place where Henry was concealed.

CHAPTER XX

A MIDNIGHT ATTACK

FOR a moment the young lieutenant was tempted to fire at the men who were in pursuit of his friend. Twice he raised the pistol in his hand, but each time lowered it, for the fear of some mistake prevented him from acting.

They were near the place where the man who was to guide them to the camp of General Wayne was to be met, and that, as well as the fact that Hugh could not have been recognized as he crossed the little clearing in front of the tavern, made him decide to delay.

Meanwhile Hugh was swiftly approaching the place where he was standing, and Henry Miner drew back within the trees that grew close to the roadside. That the two pursuers should continue their efforts in the dim light when they not only must be unaware of who it was they were chasing, but also whether or not he was alone, seemed to him to be the ex-

treme of recklessness. Their eagerness, however, was apparent, for they were running swiftly, although they had not called upon Hugh to stop, and in a brief time all three must pass the place where Henry was standing. The young officer waited in breathless suspense until Hugh had arrived, and then in a sharp low voice he called, —

“Here, Hugh! In here!”

The trapper was running close to the border of the forest, and instantly as he heard the low call of his companion, darted amongst the trees and gained his side. Even then he did not pause, but touching his friend upon the shoulder, said, —

“Come! Come! Don’t wait! Follow me!”

Henry did not pause to inquire what the plan of the trapper was, but instantly turning he followed close upon his heels. Hugh was not running now but moving cautiously, and yet Henry was enabled to see that he was not departing from the roadside. Indeed, he was keeping only a few yards from the border, and was evidently moving back in the direction of the tavern from which the men had so unexpectedly issued when they had entered upon the swift pursuit.

Henry speedily conjectured that he had

perceived the trapper's plan, which was to gain the rear of the two men and then proceed on their way at the same time. Certainly the dim light favored the bold attempt, and without speaking, he followed his friend closely until Hugh stopped abruptly to listen.

The voices of the men who had halted in the roadway could now be heard and some of their words understood.

"You ought not to have called to him," one of the men was saying. "You scared him off before we had a chance to find out who he was. He may have been one of the general's men."

"He would n't have come creeping up to the tavern as he did if he had been," retorted the other. "I had my eye on him a long time. He could n't see us, but I could see him, and the only mistake we made was not to shoot him."

"General Gray never would have forgiven you if you had and it had been one of his men."

"No, the general does n't like shooting, that's a fact. He prefers the bayonet. What is it the rebels call him?"

"The no flint general," replied the other man, "and they have good reason to, too. I

fancy he'd settle the rebellion in short order if he had command. Howe's too soft-hearted to deal with the rebels. He does n't understand what the temper over here is."

"That may be so, but what shall we do about this man we're chasing?"

"Nothing. He's slipped into the woods here and we'll have to give it up."

"Then we might as well go back."

"Yes; but we'd better put out the lights. The division won't be here before midnight."

"Which division do you mean?"

"Both of them. You understand that the general has two regiments and some light infantry and he's coming in two divisions. They'll meet here about midnight and then they'll give this 'Mad Anthony,' as the rebels call him, such a shakeup as he never has heard of before."

The other man laughed as he replied, "There won't be much left of him, for a fact. It's a fine thing that that rebel is going to show us the way."

"If he does," said the first speaker soberly.

"What do you mean?"

"He might play us false."

"Not much fear o' that. He understands that he's dealing with the 'no flint general'

and there 'll be several bayonets handy if he tries any tricks. But he won't. He's in dead earnest and declares that every man that has been whipped in the rebel army feels just as he does. We may have a whole regiment of 'em coming out to meet us almost before we know it."

The two men then turned back, and their words could no longer be heard, but all thoughts of trying to go in advance of them had now departed from the young lieutenant's mind, for the conversation, a part of which he had overheard, had caused him instantly to alter his plans. From what he had heard he concluded that the British had some plan on foot of attacking General Wayne, and it was evident that the time was that very night. The reference to the advance of the two divisions from different directions, that they were to meet near the tavern, and that the "no flint" General Gray was in command were all-sufficient to startle the young officer. He must act and at once, he instantly decided, but in a crisis of such a kind he must first decide just what he would do.

As soon as the two men had passed out of hearing, he turned to Hugh and in a low voice said, "You heard what they said, Hugh?"

"Yes, I heard it," responded the trapper.

"We must get word to General Wayne right away. How can we do it?"

"Take it ourselves."

"And not try to meet the man who is waiting for us?"

"That's the very thing we must do. We'll save time if we have him take us to the camp rather than try to find the way ourselves."

"That's right, Hugh. It'll be safe for us to push on now."

"Better wait a bit, Lieutenant."

"No, we'll go now!" said Henry decidedly.

The trapper began to remonstrate and to try to show that time would be saved if an opportunity were given the two men whose conversation had been heard, to go back to the tavern; but the young lieutenant was too strongly aroused to admit of any delay, and accordingly they stepped forth into the road again. In spite of the excitement under which he was laboring, Henry moved slowly and cautiously, peering all the time keenly before him to obtain a glimpse of the men who had preceded them. The darkness had deepened, and the clouds across the face of the sky were denser now. A few drops of

rain gave promise of a coming storm, and when the pair arrived at the clearing in which the tavern was located the outlines of the building were only dimly seen. Not a light appeared in any of the windows, and it was evident either that the two men had not re-entered the building, or were carrying out their project of having no lights.

Both Henry and his companion kept close to the border of the forest as they stealthily passed the clearing, and soon with a sigh of relief were safely in the road beyond the perilous place. Then at Hugh's word they began to run, a pace which they maintained for a half hour, when the trapper called a halt, declaring that they were now near the place where the guide was to be met who was to conduct them to the camp they were seeking.

Here Henry once more took a stand near the roadside to wait for the trapper to go on and meet the man who was to be in waiting for them. The rain had now increased from a gentle fall to a more pronounced downpour. The darkness too was intense, and as the young lieutenant glanced about him, he was rejoiced that Hugh was his companion, for of the trapper's ability to find his way in the

forest, even in the darkest night, he had had many proofs.

The branches of the trees were swaying and sighing in the wind and were flinging their drops all about him. His clothing was soaked and his body was soon chilled with the dampness and cold. He tried to assure himself that his companion had been gone but a few moments, although the moments seemed like hours to the waiting young soldier. He listened intently, hoping to hear the voice of Hugh calling to him, but not a sound save that of the storm could be heard.

The slow minutes passed and still Hugh did not return, and the waiting was becoming well-nigh unbearable. Fears began to assail him that the trapper had met with some misfortune. The report of the midnight march of the "no flint" general and his men assumed stronger proportions in his mind, and at the same time the peril of Mad Anthony Wayne and his force of fifteen hundred patriots appeared in a clearer light. Word must be carried to the unsuspecting camp at once. Delay was not merely dangerous but criminal.

Still Hugh did not return. The wind increased in force and the downpour of rain was heavier. It was an ideal night for Gen-

eral Gray's plot, for somehow it had not occurred to Henry to question the truth of the assertion he had overheard that an attack would be made that very night.

At last so much time had elapsed since Hugh's departure and his own feeling of impatience had increased to such an extent that the waiting young officer was no longer able to endure the delay. Stepping forth from his hiding-place, he advanced into the road, peering intently before him for some glimpse of his missing comrade. But in the darkness and storm not a sight greeted his eyes. It was like striving to peer through some black and impenetrable wall.

Fearful of some evil that might have befallen the trapper and that at any moment might seize upon him also, he grasped the pistol in his hand more tightly, unmindful of the fact that the rain had rendered it useless, and started in the direction in which Hugh had departed. Unfamiliar with the region, aware only that somewhere before him and not far away General Wayne and his force were in hiding, conscious of his own complete loneliness, the young lieutenant nevertheless strove to keep up heart, and slowly proceeded along the wet and muddy road. Frequently he stopped to

listen, hoping to hear the low call of his friend, but the noise of the storm was unbroken.

At last a great fear seized upon him that Hugh might have returned to the place where he had been left, and instantly Henry began to retrace his way. But despite his efforts he was unable to find again the place he had left, for the darkness appeared to be even denser than before.

Aware now that he could hardly expect to find Hugh again, Henry started resolutely once more in the direction in which he thought General Wayne's little army was concealed. He was well-nigh hopeless of being able to bring to it the information it needed so direly, but he could at least make an attempt.

He had gone but a little way, however, before his ears were saluted by a sound that instantly caused the color to fade in his flushed face. Not far away the shouts and cries of men could be heard above the noise of the storm, the reports of guns were borne to him by the wind, and his heart seemed almost to rise in his throat as he became aware that the threatened attack was being made even then.

Nor was the young lieutenant mistaken. General Gray, the "no flint general," had

succeeded in marching so stealthily in the night that his approach had not been discovered, and with the two divisions of his force united, up through the woods and through a long, narrow defile he had been led by treacherous Tory guides, until at last he had gained the left of Wayne's camp about one o'clock in the morning of that September day.¹

Strict orders had been given by him that no shots were to be fired, the rush was to be made with bayonets fixed, and no quarter was to be given. In the darkness and storm the American pickets, as they were met, were silently slain, and the body of troops moved forward. Some of these pickets were missed by the patrolling American officers, and they rushed to the general's tent with the information.

Mad Anthony, ever prompt in action, immediately ordered his men to be paraded ; but unfortunately the movement was made in the light of his own camp-fires, — the very thing his enemy most desired. Fiercely the red-coated soldiers leaped forward ; the patriots vainly tried to make a stand against them and discharged several volleys into the darkness where it was supposed the attacking party

¹ September 20, 1777.

was to be found. But their efforts were vain. The suddenness and violence of the fierce attack speedily scattered them, but not before one hundred and fifty of their comrades had fallen under the bayonets of the men whom "no flint" General Gray was leading.

Mad Anthony's promptness and energy at last organized something like a successful retreat, and the main army was regained; but the wonder is not that so many fell, but that so many escaped.

And it was the sound of this onslaught which came to the ears of Henry Miner as he stood in the road, waiting in the storm and darkness for some indication of what had become of his friend and comrade, the trapper.

CHAPTER XXI

AN UNEXPECTED CAPTURE

LIEUTENANT HENRY MINER, when, in the midst of the storm and the darkness, the blinding flashes of the guns were seen and the shouts and cries of the men were heard, stood for a moment almost overcome by the suddenness and fierceness of the attack. The men whose conversation he had overheard had spoken truly, and there could be no doubt that Mad Anthony Wayne's men were in dire straits. Even then he recalled the statement that the attacking party was to be led by Tory guides, and a wild feeling of rage against them seized upon him. It was perhaps only natural to expect the invading army to make use of every opportunity afforded it, but that it should be led by men whose homes were in the near-by region, and who by every right ought to share in the struggle for independence, was almost too much to be borne.

But his own helplessness was only too apparent. Unfamiliar with the region, unable

in the darkness to distinguish friend from foe, he stood for a moment undecided what was best for him to do. In a brief time, however, he started forward, running swiftly along the road in the direction from which the sounds of the struggle could be heard. But he had not gone far before he again halted, listening intently for some indication as to where he should go or what he should attempt.

The wild cries continued; an occasional discharge of guns could be heard; but it was still impossible to determine just where the patriots were located, or where were the attacking redcoats. Again he halted, striving to obtain some sign to guide him in the right way.

Suddenly from behind him came the sounds of approaching men, and in the dim light he could perceive a body of troops marching up the road. But there was nothing to indicate to which side they belonged, and he hastily withdrew into the adjacent forest, waiting for them to come nearer. Suddenly there was a halt made by the approaching men, the ranks were broken, and despite the calls of the leaders the party turned back and speedily disappeared in the darkness in the direction from which they had come.

With a sinking of the heart Henry realized that doubtless the division was a part of the little patriot army, and had been alarmed as it drew near to the scene of action — a conjecture which afterwards he learned was correct, when he heard that General Smallwood had attempted to march to the aid of the sorely beset men under Mad Anthony's command; but his raw militia were unable to endure the test, and indeed were not rallied until a late hour on the following day.

As the troops turned back, a wild impulse to follow them seized upon the young lieutenant, but restraining himself by an effort he remained in his place of concealment until the men could no longer be seen or heard. The sounds of the near-by engagement, however, had ceased, and to the excited young officer the silence was deadly ominous. The rain was still falling, and the darkness was unbroken. The monotonous dripping from the leaves of the trees was like a weird accompaniment to the forebodings of his own heart. There could be but little doubt of the success of the attack on the part of the "no flint" general, and the fate of his own comrades was not difficult to conjecture. Whatever the result, however, it was now too late for him to

give the aid of his own presence, and in the darkness he feared to attempt to make his way back to the place where Washington's men were encamped. Hugh, too, had not been seen, and he hesitated to return without him. There was nothing to be done except to remain in the place where he then was until the light of the early morning should enable him to find his way.

How the slow hours did drag ! Keenly alert as Henry was, and intently listening for sounds that might indicate the presence of new perils, his every sense active, and his feeling of anxiety increasing with the passing moments, when at last the first faint streaks of the dawn appeared, it was with a sense of deep relief that he stepped forward into the muddy road once more.

He glanced hastily in either direction, and then, as he perceived a man slowly approaching from the direction in which the struggle had occurred, he stepped hastily back into the place he had left, resolved to await the coming of the stranger, who was apparently alone, and from him learn more fully of the exciting events of the night.

As the man came nearer, Henry could perceive that he was not clad in the uniform of

either army, and his first thought was that the stranger was one of the farmers dwelling in the vicinity. But as the man approached, a new and startled expression suddenly appeared on the face of the young lieutenant. Surely, he thought, he knew this man; but the recognition apparently did not afford any comfort, for the expression of anger on his face deepened as the man drew near.

Grimly the young officer looked down at the pistol in his belt, useless as a weapon now, for the heavy rain had done its work well. He glanced again at the man, who was now only a few yards away, and then suddenly he drew the harmless pistol and, advancing a step, thrust it through the bushes that stood between him and the road, until the barrel could be seen by a passer-by, though he himself was still partly concealed from view. Motionless, although he was intensely excited, he waited for the man to come opposite his hiding-place, and then he called sharply, —

“Jack Lippard, stop right where you are!”

The startled man stepped back in astonishment, but his eyes fell upon the protruding barrel of the pistol and the arm and hand that grasped it.

“Who are you? What do you want of

me?" demanded the man, who was indeed the one whom Henry had suspected him to be.

"It does n't matter who I am. Put your pistols on the ground before you."

John Lippard hesitated and glanced hastily up and down the road as if he was meditating an attempt at flight.

"Do as I say!" repeated the voice sternly. "You see you are covered by my pistol, and you know what to expect if you don't do what I tell you!"

"Who are you?" again demanded John Lippard, at the same time drawing the two weapons which could be seen in his belt.

"Place your pistols on the ground!" repeated the voice in still sterner tones. Then speaking loudly, as if he were addressing men on the opposite side of the road, Henry called, "Fire at him, men, if he makes the first movement to run. We'll put an end to the rascal if he tries to get away this time!"

John Lippard turned quickly about and glanced keenly at the bushes on the opposite side of the road. Whether it was that in the dim light he mistook branches for protruding gun barrels, or that the air of confidence in the voice of the concealed man had deceived him, was never known; but John Lippard in-

stantly obeyed and placed both his weapons on the ground before him.

“Now step backward three yards, and don’t you try to get away!” called Henry. “Fire at him, men, if he tries to run!” he added to his pretended friends on the opposite side of the road.

The man backed slowly away from the pistols, and stood peering intently into the bushes from which the command had come. That he was alarmed was evident from his bearing as well as from the expression upon his countenance. Who or how many were in the party that had hailed him he had no means of knowing, and the very uncertainty added to his perplexity. At another time Henry Miner might have been moved by the ludicrous aspect, but he was too much in earnest now to have any other feeling than that of anger at the man who had been found so near the scene of the attack in the preceding night. Besides there had flashed into his mind the words of the conversation he had overheard, and the sight of Jack Lippard had recalled the statement that the “no flint” general’s men had been led by Tories to the hidden camp of General Wayne. Tory and traitor were in the eager young officer’s mind well-

nigh synonymous terms, and of his own confidence in his belief that the man before him had been guilty of treacherous dealings with the enemy, in spite of the apparent confidence of Captain Martin in him, we already know. Then, too, had not the two men in their conversation referred to the fact that some of the guides were men who had been whipped in the American army? And that description, applying, as it surely did, to the man before him, increased his own feeling that now there was something for Jack Lippard to explain which even that slippery individual might find impossible to evade.

Resolutely the young lieutenant advanced into the road, still holding his useless weapon in his hand, and covering the startled man with it. Before John Lippard could recover from his surprise Henry had stooped and picked up both pistols from the ground, thrusting one into his belt, along with his own water-soaked weapon, and holding the remaining one in readiness for instant use.

"Well, I never!" ejaculated John Lippard as he perceived who his captor was. "It's you, is it?"

"Yes, sir, that's who it is," replied Henry quietly. "You are my prisoner, it seems."

"Who are the men with you?" demanded John Lippard, glancing at the bushes as he spoke.

"There is no one with me. I'm alone."

For an instant the man gazed at him as if he was unable to believe what he had heard, and then burst into a noisy laugh.

"That's a good one! That's a good one on me! I'll never say again, Henry, that you're not fit to be an officer. You ought to be next to Washington himself."

As the young officer did not smile or reply, the prisoner continued, "And now that you've got me, what do you intend to do with me?"

"Take you back to camp."

"I'm ready. That's the very place I had started for, any way. Nothin' like bein' in good company when you're travelin'. That's always been my belief."

John Lippard endeavored to speak lightly, but Henry was convinced that the man was more nervous than he wished to appear. "We'll start now, then, if you are ready," he said. "No; not that way," he added sternly, as the man started to approach to his side. "You go in front of me."

The prisoner pretended to laugh as he com-

plied with the demand, but there was a flash of anger or of fear from his eyes which did not escape his captor.

As soon as they set forth on their way John Lippard, looking back at Henry, said, "If it's a fair question, Henry, I'd like to know how you happen to be here. This meeting is an unexpected pleasure."

"I'll answer it by asking you how it is that *you* happen to be here."

"I was on my way to Chester to see Captain Martin, but was taken prisoner on the way. I've no doubt the captain'll thank you when we get back."

The relations of Jack Lippard with Captain Martin, as we know, had already been of a nature that had puzzled Henry, and for a moment his heart misgave him as he thought that perhaps it was a mistake to arrest the man before him. But he was so thoroughly convinced of the man's treachery that he speedily recovered from the fear and at once decided to test Jack Lippard with certain questions of his own.

"I'll tell you how I happen to be here, though, first of all, you know Captain Martin is n't at Chester. He was with Mad Anthony, and I myself came to see him."

"I happen to know," replied Jack Lippard quietly, "that the captain had gone to Chester. As for Mad Anthony, — you know as well as I do what's become of him."

"No, I don't. What has become of him?" demanded Henry eagerly.

"Cut all to pieces."

"I don't believe it!"

"That does n't change it any. General Gray fell on his camp last night, and his men used their bayonets so much there's hardly a man left. I myself heard one of the Hessians say he'd stabbed so many it was like sticking pigs."

"Horrible! And yet I don't believe Mad Anthony would ever get caught in such a trap that he could n't get out. How did you happen to hear this Hessian say what he did?"

"I did n't hear any one say it."

"Just now you said you did."

"I don't think you heard just right."

"Look here, Jack Lippard! I want to tell you something. Last night Hugh and I stopped at a tavern back here" —

"You did?" interrupted the prisoner, turning his head sharply and displaying a face that was almost ghastly.

“Yes,” resumed Henry, elated over the effect of his words, “and that is n’t all, either. General Gray’s men were led by some Tories and some men who had been whipped in our army. Perhaps you heard your Hessian friend speak of that, too.”

Jack Lippard’s eyes were blazing with fear or anger, Henry could not determine which, and his face was deadly pale. Suspicious of a sudden action on his part, Henry said sternly, “Eyes front, Jack! We won’t talk any more till we are in camp again, and don’t you look behind you again, either. I” —

Before the young officer could complete his words, the sound of an approaching horseman was heard, and despite his efforts to conceal himself and his prisoner behind the bushes along the roadside, Henry knew that they had also been seen.

CHAPTER XXII

THE RETURN

THE approaching horseman had been riding swiftly along the muddy road, but he drew rein sharply at the sight of the two men before him, and to a disinterested observer it would have been apparent that he was almost as startled by the sight as was the young officer himself. He was by this time, however, near enough to enable him to be seen, and as Henry looked keenly at him he suddenly turned sharply about and called, —

“Hugh! Hugh! Come on! Come here!”

The trapper, for it was indeed the recent companion of Henry, after a momentary hesitation, at once urged his horse forward and soon halted before the men. He glanced in surprise from one to the other, and then said slowly, “I don’t understand, lad — I mean Lieutenant.”

“Where did you get the horse, Hugh?” asked Henry, ignoring the implied question.

“I found him in the road back here.

There did n't appear to be any one to claim him, so I thought it would be too bad to leave him where the redcoats might find him, and I started with him for our camp." As he spoke the trapper dismounted and stood beside Henry, holding the horse by the bridle.

"Did you find the man last night?" said Henry.

"No, sir; and I lost the one I was with, too. You did n't wait for me, lad."

"I could n't wait, Hugh, and it would n't have made any difference if I had. Where have you been all this time?"

"In the woods. I did n't seem to be able to get away."

"Have you heard what has become of Mad Anthony's men?"

"They were all torn up. I think some of them got away, but a good many did n't. Some of the farmers have been burying the dead this morning. I hear that they put more than fifty into one grave."

"You don't mean it!" exclaimed the young officer in a low voice. "Then what Jack Lip-pard here said must have been true."

"Of course it was true," spoke up the prisoner, sharply. "And that is n't the only truth I told you, either."

“What was the other?”

“About myself and Captain Martin. If you know when you are wise you’ll let me go about my business and you’ll go about yours.”

“Hugh,” said Henry sharply, “you heard what those men back by the tavern said last night, did n’t you?”

“About what?”

“About who were leading the ‘no flint’ general’s men.”

“Yes, sir. They said the guides were Tories and deserters — some of the men who had been whipped in our army.”

“That’s it!” replied Henry eagerly. “You heard Jack Lippard’s name mentioned, did n’t you?” As he spoke, the young officer gazed intently into the trapper’s face, and it was not difficult for the elder man to understand what reply he was expected to make.

“I heard just what you heard, Lieutenant, and there can’t be any mistake,” said Hugh quietly.

“We’ll take our man back to camp” —

“Just where I was going,” interrupted John Lippard, laughing noisily.

“And turn him over to those who’ll know how to deal with him,” resumed Henry, ignoring the interruption.

“Lieutenant,” said Hugh quickly, “you take this horse, won’t you?”

“It’s yours and not mine.”

“It would n’t do for me to ride mounted and you go on foot,” said the trapper eagerly. “You can go on ahead of us and I’ll see that this man does n’t get lost on the way. I’ll bring him to you, never you fear.”

For a moment the young lieutenant hesitated. So convinced was he of the treachery of John Lippard that he felt that to entrust him even to the trapper was not right. And yet there was some mystery in it all that he was unable to explain. The relations of the man with Captain Martin were certainly perplexing, and there was a possibility that he himself might be mistaken. In such an event his zeal might only lead to further trouble. It might be wise for him to return to the camp and if the captain was there, seek an interview with him before the prisoner was brought, and so learn if he really had been mistaken in his conclusions. Hugh, too, was a man upon whom he could fully rely, and in the comfort of the thought he said quickly, —

“Very well, Sergeant, I’ll take the horse and go on; but you must n’t let Jack Lippard get away.”

“No fear of that,” said the prisoner glibly, “seeing as the camp is the very place for which I’d started myself.”

“Watch him every minute, Hugh,” continued Henry, “and if he tries to break away you’ll know what to do. We’ll give him a chance by and by to explain himself and tell his story, but just now you mustn’t let him give you the slip. Here, take one of these pistols,” he added, as, after carefully examining it and assuring himself that it was ready for use, he handed one of the weapons to the trapper.

The young officer then lightly sprang upon the back of the horse, and without once glancing behind him, started swiftly down the road. When at last he reëntered the place where the American army was encamped, it was not difficult for him to perceive that the result of the attack of the “no flint” general on Mad Anthony Wayne’s men was already known. A few hurried questions were briefly answered, and the very manner of the men was indicative of the gloom that everywhere prevailed.

In the midst of it all, however, there were no signs of discouragement. As long as the leaders were willing to lead, it was evident

that the greater part of the men were ready to follow, and that the spirit of the so-called "rebellion" was far from being crushed.

A brief investigation convinced Henry that Captain Martin was not to be found in the camp, nor could he obtain any information as to his whereabouts. As Hugh would soon come with his prisoner, he decided to consult his colonel at once and lay before him all the information he had secured. Whatever action should then be taken must devolve upon his superior officer, and he himself would be free of blame for any mistake that might be made ; but Henry's heart was not entirely at rest when he thought of what the result might be to him in the event of Jack Lippard being permitted to go free. Already he knew he had the bitter hatred of the man, and aware as he was of his spirit of revenge, as well as of the threats which the man had made, he was convinced that his own troubles would doubtless be increased. But now the feeling of horror over the bloodthirsty attack upon General Wayne was strong upon him, and the fact that the merciless General Gray's men had been guided by treacherous deserters from the ranks of the patriot army, some of whom had fled because of the whipping they

had received for violating the express commands of the great leader, was something the officers ought to know, if they were not already aware of it.

Accordingly, after he had left the horse he had been riding in the hands of an orderly, he at once sought out the quarters of his colonel, and as soon as he was admitted into his presence, related the story he had to tell, going back to the very beginning of his experiences with John Lippard.

The colonel listened thoughtfully to all that the young officer had to relate before he replied, "It certainly does have a dark look. I fancy you know that Captain Martin has been using men as go-betweens?"

"I have heard of it. But, Colonel, is n't it possible that some of the men he has been using may have been giving the redcoats more than they gave us? Of course Captain Martin knows all about it, but he is n't here and Jack Lippard is."

"True. True. We need the captain's help. But if we move soon, as I doubt not we shall, then we may not see him for some time, and meanwhile we must decide what to do with this man. Send him to me and I'll look after him."

"He has a slick tongue," suggested the young lieutenant as he prepared to depart.

The colonel smiled as he replied, "We've seen so much of that, we're not to be too easily caught. Captain Martin will know; and I'll look after the man till he returns."

Henry saluted and turned away; but in a moment he was recalled by the colonel, who had risen and was advancing. "You have heard, then, of what befell General Wayne last night?" he inquired.

"The report is that he has lost three hundred men."

"Not so many; but any are too many. However, we have received quite full details from the north." The colonel's face was glowing, and Henry found himself at once intensely interested. "Yes," continued the colonel, "we now are assured that the first reports from Bennington were too low. Colonel Stark captured nearly all of the German army that was sent against him, and now we know that Colonel Barry St. Leger has been driven out of the Mohawk Valley. What this will mean for General John Burgoyne if we are only able to hold General Howe here near Philadelphia and prevent him from going to the aid of the men in the north, is something

it might be well for the men here to understand."

As the young officer turned away, his face was glowing. The report of the successes in the north was certainly inspiring, and light began to dawn upon him as to the purpose of the great commander in remaining where he then was, in spite of the peril and disaster that had been suffered. Howe was to be held near Philadelphia at any cost, and with supplies cut off from the army of General Burgoyne the fate of that body would soon be decided. Even the work of the "no flint" general on the preceding night, horrible though it had been, was now, in the new light he had received, effective only in its brutality, and in no way blocked the plan upon which the colonel had briefly touched.

When he returned to his own quarters it was to find Hugh and his prisoner there. As he perceived them, Henry said, "I have seen the colonel, and my orders are to bring you to him."

"Is n't Captain Martin here?" inquired John Lippard sharply.

"You knew better than any one that he was n't here."

The prisoner apparently was surprised and

cast down by the information, but he made no protest when Henry bade him follow, and speedily conducted him into the presence of the colonel as he had been bidden, and there he left him.

Nor did he have any opportunity soon to learn what decision had been made concerning him, for the army was speedily busied, and he with the others, in the tasks that were pressed upon it. Skirmishes, manœuvres of various kinds, plans for retarding the army of redcoats, even if it could not be turned aside from its purpose, were of almost daily occurrence. For two weeks the efforts continued, and with every passing day the feeling of satisfaction in the hearts of the leaders of the American army deepened when it was seen that, although there was slight hope of conquering Howe in battle, he nevertheless was being held where he then was, and John Burgoyne would not receive any aid from him.

But quietly and slowly the British army was pushing its way to Philadelphia, and at last, on the twenty-sixth day of September, General Howe established his headquarters at Germantown, by the bank of the Schuylkill River, at that time separated from Philadelphia by six miles of open country.

At the same time Lord Cornwallis with his troops, with colors flying and bands of music playing, marched into the old city of Philadelphia, where the declaration of independence had been made, and the "rebel capital" was soon in possession of the armies of the king.

Although many of the people dwelling in the city were deeply impressed by the entrance of the redcoats, the little patriot army failed somehow to be equally moved, for it showed no signs of disbanding.

Aware that as long as it held together and remained in the vicinity, and the Americans held the two forts on the Delaware River commanding the entrance into the city by water, his own supplies were likely to be endangered, as soon as Lord Howe's fleet arrived, after a rough voyage, off the mouth of the river, the British leader quickly decided to capture or destroy both Fort Mifflin and Fort Mercer. Accordingly, Sir William sent a part of his army to join with his brother's fleet in attacking the two forts, well assured that when once they were in his possession his hold on Philadelphia would not be disputed by any army the colonists might send against him.

This action on the part of General Howe

afforded "the fox," as many of the British were pleased to call Washington, the very opportunity for which he had been waiting. And soon the young lieutenant, Henry Miner, was to learn not only of the decision which had been made concerning his own personal enemy and prisoner, John Lippard, but also of greater things which caused the lesser ones to be thrust for a time into the background.

CHAPTER XXIII

GERMANTOWN

THE plan which the desperate American commander formed for attacking the part of the British army which remained at Germantown while the other part was acting in connection with the fleet in overthrowing the two forts on the Delaware River, has been looked upon as one of the most brilliant and daring of all his many deeds. Cautious, careful, and reserved as Washington usually was, nevertheless when he did strike, it was with all his strength, and in any action into which he threw himself, he entered with all his power.

The plan failed and the battle was lost, though not from any fault of the great general; but it is said that the battle of Germantown did more to cause the French nation to decide to aid the struggling Colonies in their efforts to gain their independence than did even the surrender of John Burgoyne, which occurred not long after this time. Many of the greatest of the European soldiers were

warm in their words of praise, and many were the prophecies that if the hardy soldiers continued their struggle and did not lose heart, soon, with the experience they were securing, they would prove to be more than a match for the redcoated veterans of King George.

Germantown even at this time was a beautiful village. There was one long street nearly two miles in length, and on either side were stone houses, each set in the midst of a large lawn. Indeed, the houses were said to have been three hundred feet apart, and the flowers and greenery added much to the beauty of the scattered village. Four roads led into the place, and near the upper end of the long street stood the great stone house of Judge Benjamin Chew, which has become famous from the fact that in and about it occurred some of the most desperate fighting of the battle.

About a mile below the Chew house stood the Market house, near which was the main camp of the British army; on one side the Hessian general Knyphausen was stationed, and on the other was Grant, who had made himself felt so strongly in the battle of Long Island. Regiments or battalions were also stationed in other parts of the village, but the

American general's plan was to have his army advance by all four of the roads to which reference has already been made, and by a united and furious attack upon the main body of the British near the Market house drive them back upon the Schuylkill River and compel them to surrender. The fact that his own forces were outnumbered was not forgotten, but with the memory of Trenton still strong in the minds of his soldiers, doubtless he was hoping to accomplish by daring and boldness that which under other circumstances he never would have expected.

Sullivan was in command of the American right wing, with some of the best and most experienced soldiers under him, and with such daring leaders as Mad Anthony Wayne, Maxwell, and others to aid he was to engage the left wing of the British in front, and at the same time General Armstrong with the Pennsylvania troops (mostly militia) was to attack the same wing on the flank. It was not expected that the militia would do more than increase the confusion of the redcoats.

General Greene was to command the American left wing, and in two columns was to attack the right wing of the British; and at the same time other militia, which General

Forman and General Smallwood were to lead, were to attack the same right wing on the flank as the Pennsylvania militia were to strive to drive back the other wing. The very best of the American army was in this action, and for a time it seemed as if the carefully arranged plan of Washington was destined to succeed.

It was seven o'clock in the evening of October 3d, 1777, when the march upon Germantown was begun. Washington himself was with the division which Sullivan was leading, and the anxiety of the great leader can be readily conjectured. At sunrise the darkness did not flee away, for a fog, dense, low, and thick, settled over all. But the attempt was not to be delayed, and the action began with a rush. A light detachment of the redcoats were driven from the place they were holding and their cannon captured. Then the massed troops next drove the redcoats under Musgrave from their position; but the British leader with a part of his followers took refuge in the house of Judge Chew and began to fire from the open doors and windows upon their foes below. Quickly the Americans brought their cannon into action and began to fire at the house itself, hoping

to batter down its heavy stone walls. But the guns were chiefly three-pound pieces (the heaviest was only six-pound) and it was speedily discovered that they were unable to make any impression upon the massive walls of the old building.

As soon as this was clearly known, it was decided to leave General Maxwell and his brigade to besiege the inmates of the Chew mansion, while all the others were ordered to make good time down the long street in the direction of the Market house. The noise of the guns there had already informed the main division of the British army of what was occurring, and so the effect of any surprise of sudden action was already lost.

Nevertheless the zeal of the Americans was so great and the fury of their attack was so keen that soon even the veteran soldiers of Knyphausen began to give way before the onslaught of Sullivan and his followers.

Meanwhile the dense fog had somewhat delayed General Greene in his approach, but at this very time he began his attack upon the British right wing. His men were as determined as those of Sullivan, and the leaders were as eager. Steadily, fiercely, the Continentals advanced, and soon the right wing

of the British was beginning to fall back. Although the fog was too dense to permit all the American army to perceive the full measure of success they were gaining, it was soon known that their enemies were falling into confusion and giving way before them. The spirits of the men were high, and the force of their onslaught increased. To capture the British army at Germantown was to do a greater deed than had been accomplished at Trenton nearly a year before this time. The ranks were holding well together, and the response to the words of the leaders was enthusiastic.

At this very time, just when victory apparently was assured, the action of the drunken American general, Stephen, changed the entire aspect of the battle. With his men he had been stationed off to the right of General Greene, and now he was supposed to be marching to his aid. His presence at this moment doubtless would have added just the force that was required, and the wavering lines of the redcoats would have broken, and without doubt the most of them would have been captured. Already Lord Cornwallis was rapidly marching from Philadelphia to the aid of his comrades, but if Stephen had done

his duty the arrival of Cornwallis and his two battalions would have been too late to rally the scattered troops.

As General Stephen with his enthusiastic followers swept into the village, the sound of the engagement near Judge Chew's house caused him to change his line of march from the Market house to that of the judge. Even this mistake might not have lost the battle if that had been all. But the fog outside was not more confusing than was the befuddled brain of the drunken general. The thick of the battle was now not about Judge Chew's house, but near the Market house, almost a mile distant.

At this time Mad Anthony Wayne, with all the wild enthusiasm of his nature, was leading his enthusiastic comrades in pursuit of the redcoats, who were fleeing before him. So eager were the men and so unmindful were they of all save the fleeing redcoats that none of them realized that the brigade had swerved somewhat to the east and now was directly in the pathway of the approaching force under Stephen. The latter, confused by the dense fog, and still more confused by his drinking, without waiting to discover who it was before him, and hastily concluding that he must be

near the enemy, gave the word for an attack, and so his followers began to fire upon Wayne's men — their own companions in arms.

Instantly the confusion became appalling. Mad Anthony's men, with the enemy in front, and now finding themselves attacked also in the rear, were driven back upon General Sullivan's men, who too knew not what to make of the apparently unexpected attack from that direction. The confusion speedily became a panic. The dim light added to the consternation. Shouts became cries, and the very noise of the battle afforded no help. Friends and foes seemed to be inextricably mingled and the hand of every man against his neighbor. And all this because General Stephen, to strengthen him for the fight, had imbibed too freely of "Dutch courage." Drunkenness itself may be disgusting, but disgust is not the foremost element in the memory of this man. Small wonder it is that soon afterwards General Stephen was tried by court-martial and dismissed in disgrace from the service of the Colonies. Incompetency could be forgiven, even mistakes were perhaps to be occasionally expected; but drunkenness in battle, which caused the death of many men and

brought a crushing sorrow to countless hearts and homes, — surely the penalty of dismissal from the army was none too severe to visit upon the wretch.

Meanwhile Lord Cornwallis — the ablest of all the British generals that came to the shores of America in the war of the Revolution — had by this time arrived upon the scene. Quick to perceive and take advantage of the change, he and “no flint” General Gray hastily rushed to the aid of their comrades. The retreating lines were turned back, the wavering were strengthened. Their very confidence increased the confusion in the ranks of the Americans. One of the regiments under Greene’s command was quickly surrounded and captured by the redcoats. All that the American leaders might hope to do now was to withdraw their confused troops from the field. Already six hundred and seventy-three of their numbers had been killed or wounded, and five hundred and thirty-five of the British soldiers had suffered a like fate. To bring the army safely from the field was, therefore, now a task of great proportions. The panic soon departed, but the opportunity for winning was gone forever. At last a semblance of order was restored, the troops were

marched from the field, all the cannon were saved, and the battle of Germantown was ended.

What the feelings of Washington must have been, it is easy for us to-day to understand. Much of the blame for the defeat was at the time attributed to him. Some of the leading men in the new nation began to speak openly against him and to declare that it was useless to attempt much or even to hope for success until the "incompetent" leaders had given place to better men. Secret plots began to be formed, but in the midst of it all the greatness of the great man, in the light of history, was never more apparent. Although he knew — he must have known — that his plan for the battle of Germantown was ably formed and that success almost crowned his efforts, and that, if it had not been for the mistake of the drunken General Stephen, the battle would have been won; and if it had been won the probability was strong that the war would have been ended soon afterwards and independence been secured without further bloodshed, — in spite of all these things the silence of the great American is sublime. George Washington did many great deeds, but far greater than any deed he did was what George

Washington was. Greater than the general or the president was the manhood of the man behind both.

The depression that followed the battle of Germantown — so nearly won, so wickedly lost, — was increased by the fall of the two forts on the Delaware that occurred not long after. It may be that the fibre of the new nation was toughened and its resisting power increased by the depressing experiences, but, however that may be, it is certain that at the time the hearts even of the bravest were tested to the utmost. In Philadelphia many of the people who had been lukewarm or faltering in their loyalty to the cause of the colonies, now came out openly on the side of the British. Congress, alarmed by the approach of the army of the invaders, had fled to Lancaster. The winter was fast approaching which was destined to be one of the most memorable in all the history of our land, supplies were low, no money was to be had, the hearts of the leaders were heavy, the allegiance of the people seemed to be faltering. Such times, however, test the stuff of which men are made. All men face difficulties, but the difficulties, whatever their nature, soon declare who are the true men and who the false. They reveal men as well as make men.

And it may be that one of the great lessons of it all is, not only the final success which was won, but the spirit and the manner in which it was gained as well.

A week had elapsed since the battle, when one day in the camp of the American army Henry Miner found himself face to face with Captain Martin. After a warm word of greeting had been given, the captain said, "I hear it was you who took Jack Lippard prisoner a few days ago."

The young lieutenant briefly acknowledged the part he had taken and then eagerly inquired, "Do you know what has become of him?"

"Come with me, Lieutenant," replied Captain Martin, "and I'll tell you what I know." Eagerly Henry followed his friend as he led the way to his quarters, and soon was listening to the captain's talk.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE AID OF SIMON SAFFORD

“IT is difficult for me to believe that Jack Lippard has been a traitor,” began Captain Martin, “but in these days it is hard to distinguish between our friends and our enemies. Some of the men in Philadelphia, upon whom I thought we could rely absolutely, have renounced their allegiance and gone over to the side of the king. I can’t find it in my heart to feel as hard toward them as some of our men do, for I think I understand perhaps a little more clearly than some just how they feel.”

“I have n’t any sympathy for them,” said the young lieutenant sharply.

“I am not finding any excuses,” responded the captain, smiling sadly. “All I mean is that with some of them there has been but little interest in the struggle and less hope of success. And now that the redcoats are in our capital, — though to me I confess that does n’t mean very much, — in spite of our successes

in the north, they look upon the cause as lost. It is not a high motive, but a natural one, that governs them. But now I wish you would tell me all you know of your experiences with Jack Lippard."

Thus bidden Henry related the story of his adventures, entering quite fully into the details of the encounter in the swamp near Morristown and the actions of the man when he was captured. The captain listened thoughtfully and did not once interrupt the young soldier.

When his story was ended he said quietly, "And still I am not altogether convinced. I could tell you of some things that would doubtless surprise you, and convince you too, that Jack has not been all that you think him. However, I have leaned to the safe side and have sent him with the few prisoners we have to Lancaster. I shall later give him an opportunity to clear himself, but just now we are too busy for that and are likely to be for a few days to come."

"What do you think will be done next?" inquired the young lieutenant eagerly, at once diverted from the main purpose of the interview.

"That is something no man can tell, not

even our general himself. All depends upon what the enemy's plans are. I know we can depend upon you for one," added Captain Martin, indicating that the interview was ended.

"I shall do my best," responded Henry modestly.

"That's right! That's right," said the captain cordially. "We, that is, you and I, have been fortunate to come off so well thus far. I trust that your friend was not hurt in the battle."

"Do you mean Hugh?"

"Yes. He's a strange character."

"He was not hit either. He's a good man, Hugh is," said Henry warmly.

"I have no doubt of it. I wish we had more like him."

Within a few days the little American army was so busy that even the information Henry had received that Jack Lippard was with the prisoners was almost driven from his mind. In a few weeks, although they were bravely resisted at first, the redcoats succeeded, as has already been related, in taking the two forts on the Delaware River and thus secured a safe entrance into the city. To accomplish this, six thousand additional men were sent to the

aid of the Howes from New York by General Clinton. A few weeks of skirmishing and manœuvring followed, but the winter was then at hand and all were aware that the active measures must cease until the warmer days appeared. The news of the surrender of John Burgoyne and his army in the North was by this time generally known, and caused great rejoicing among the soldiers under Washington. It did not, however, serve to mitigate the ills which were threatening them; and where and in what manner the approaching winter was to be passed was a problem extremely difficult to solve.

The enemy, numbering nearly twice as many men as Washington had with him, were safely and comfortably established in the city, and the possibility of driving them out was not even a remote one. On the other hand, supplies and equipments were scanty among the American soldiers, no place of comfort or even of safety was theirs, and the hearts of the leaders were sorely beset by the trials and problems arising both within and without the army.

At this time, late in November, the Americans were encamped at Whitemarsh, a place which to the leaders was extremely unsatisfac-

tory. The great leader requested his generals to express their ideas in writing as to what was best for the army to do under the circumstances, and on the last day of November called a council of war to deliberate concerning the matter.

The council convened, but there was a marked difference of opinion among the generals. Some urged that Wilmington should be selected as the place for the winter quarters, others favored a camp at Tredyffrin, a few miles west of the Schuylkill, while still others were strongly of the opinion that the army should be strung out in a line from Reading to Lancaster, the latter being the place where Congress was assembled and where the few prisoners the Americans had secured were kept.

In the midst of this confusion of plan and purpose, Washington himself decided that the entire force should go into winter quarters at Valley Forge. He was desirous of being near enough to Philadelphia to enable him to watch the movements of his enemies and at the same time serve as a barrier between them and the unprotected people of the region.

The movement from Whitemarsh began on December 11th, and by the 19th of that

month the entire force had arrived at Valley Forge. It was a time when the great soul of Washington was tried and tested as it was in but few other events in the entire struggle ; but the time of testing revealed his greatness as it did also the littleness of some of the men upon whom he had a right to rely. He issued some general orders for the men to erect huts, and at the same time assured his followers that he himself should remain in the camp and share in whatever hardships or inconveniences came to his men. December 18th was observed as a day of fasting and prayer, and on the following day the work of constructing the camp began.

The very work which was demanded was a protection to the scantily clad men, for in a measure it served to keep them warm. The men were divided into parties of twelve, and every division was assigned its own specific place by the officers in command. Some were busied in cutting down the great trees in the forests, others fashioned them into the required form and shape, and still others had the duty of erecting them into the huts that were to serve as a shelter for the soldiers. The camp was planned to be like a small city, and there were to be regular streets, and each division of

the army was to have its own assignment as to location. The party in each regiment which soonest completed its hut was to have a special reward of twelve dollars; and any one who might contrive or suggest some covering for the huts cheaper, better, and more easily made than the slabs was also to have his reward.¹

The fact that the wives of some of the leading officers insisted not only upon being with their husbands in the camp, but also on sharing in the hardships of the soldiers, served as an additional incentive to the men; and the work went busily on and was completed much sooner than any had dared to hope. Hunger and nakedness and disease were soon to enter the camp, for no guns or bravery could stave

¹ The dimensions and styles of the huts erected at Valley Forge are thus given in a quotation from Washington's orderly book: "Fourteen feet by sixteen each; the sides, ends, and roofs made with logs; the roofs made tight with split slabs or some other way; the sides made tight with clay; a fire-place made of wood, and secured with clay on the inside, eighteen inches thick; this fire-place to be in the rear of the hut; the door to be in the end next to the street; the doors to be made of split oak slabs, unless boards can be procured; the side walls to be six and a half feet high. The officers' huts are to form a line in the rear of the troops, — one hut to be allowed to each general officer, one to the staff of each brigade, one to the field officer of each regiment, one to the staff of each regiment, one to the commissioned officer of two companies, and one to every twelve non-commissioned officers and soldiers."

off these foes. The very inactivity which was soon to be enforced increased the suffering, and homesickness was added to the other ills. Tories were on every side ; Congress was halting and inactive ; and not far away was an army well equipped and well cared for by the strongest power on all the globe.

The horror of the winter at Valley Forge has been the theme of many writers, but no pen can ever fully express the heroism of the brave little band. That men did not desert, that the spirit of determination still prevailed, is a lasting tribute to the sterling qualities of those hardy forefathers of ours who were willing to lay down their lives rather than give up the liberty for which they were contending. The story of Valley Forge should be given to every man, woman, and child that comes from foreign shores to make a home in the United States of America.

Lieutenant Henry Miner had been busied with the others in the erection of the huts, and the work had been completed several weeks when one day he was surprised to receive a visit from Captain Martin. That the purpose of the visit was serious Henry soon perceived, and after an hour had elapsed the captain, as he rose to depart, said, "I think it is all un-

derstood now and we have arranged for everything except for the man who is to fit you out. I doubt not that the trapper can do that, however."

"I think I know a better man than Hugh for what I shall want," suggested Henry.

"So? And who is he?"

"Simon Safford."

"I don't know him."

"He is a Connecticut Yankee, and I think half the men who know him believe that he is in league with the powers of darkness. He tried all sorts of tricks on the men in the camp at Morristown, and he got even Hugh to believe in him for a time. I had all I could do to get the trapper out of his clutches."

"Is he shrewd? Can he be trusted to hold his tongue?"

"I think you need have no fear of that."

"I leave it all to you, Lieutenant," said the captain, as he turned and grasped the hand of the young officer. "You know all that I would say, but I shall leave it unsaid. It may be a long time before we shall meet again, but my best wishes go with you. Good-by!"

"Good-by, Captain Martin," responded Henry. "There's one thing I'd like to ask of you."

"What's that?" inquired the captain, still holding the hand of his friend.

"I probably shan't have many chances to write letters, and if you could somehow get word to my home I should"—

"Not another word. All that can be done shall be; you may be well assured of that."

"Thank you."

The two men shook hands again, and then Captain Martin turned away, nor did he once look back until he had passed down the street and disappeared from sight.

Henry Miner had stood in the doorway watching him as long as he could be seen, and then resolutely he donned his hat and at once started on his search for Simon Safford. He found the man on the street to which he had been assigned, and at once stopped him.

"You are Simon Safford, are n't you?" he inquired.

The man glanced up and down the street furtively before he replied, as if he was tempted to run rather than reply to the unexpected question. Apparently no way of escape appeared, and he cautiously replied, "It's a good name, is n't it?"

"Excellent, because it's the name of the one man above all others I want to see now."

“What d’ye want o’ him?”

“I want to see him.”

“He has n’t been doin’ anything so ter’ble bad, has he?”

“He knows more about that than I do.”

“If I see him anywhar I’ll tell him ye want t’ see him.”

“Yes, do,” said Henry, his eyes twinkling as he spoke. “Just tell him I have a little piece of work for him to do that’ll pay him six dollars.”

“I’m yer man!”

“Are *you* Simon Safford?” inquired Henry in pretended surprise.

“I am that! That’s my name an’ th’ name o’ my father before me.”

“Why did n’t you say so, then, when I first spoke to you?”

“Well — I was n’t jest certain sure o’ what ye wanted o’ me, so I thought I’d be a bit cautious. There’s nothin’ like bein’ careful, ye see.”

“That’s just the reason why I want you for this work I have on hand. Come to my quarters an hour from now.”

“I’ll go with ye neow if ye say th’ word.”

“No, come at the time I say. I’ll expect you,” added Henry, as he turned away.

“I’ll be thar ! Six dollars, ye said, did n’t ye ? Can’t ye make it seven ?”

“I said six ; but it won’t be anything if you say it out loud again.”

“I’ll be as silent ’s the grave !”

The young lieutenant did not delay to listen to any more, and at once made his way back to his hut. There he found Hugh, but on a pretext he sent him on an errand and so was rid of his presence, and at the appointed time Simon Safford, tall, ungainly, lank, his bead-like eyes shining with cunning, appeared, and Henry at once led him within the hut and closed and carefully barred the door behind him.

CHAPTER XXV

IN THE OLD MILL

AN hour had elapsed when again the door of the hut which Lieutenant Henry Miner occupied was opened and Simon Safford prepared to depart. There was an expression of perplexity on his face, but his shining little eyes were even brighter than when he had entered, and the cunning which was characteristic of the man had never been more apparent.

“Neow ye won’t forgit t’ have it with ye, will ye?” he inquired, as he halted for a moment in the doorway.

“No, sir! I shall not forget. Do you, too, see to it that you remember your part.”

“No fear o’ that,” replied Simon Safford cheerfully. “I’m in want o’ that money.”

“It will be yours according to our agreement, if you do your part.”

The young lieutenant hastily closed the door as if he saw no other method of bringing the interview to an end, and his recent visitor proceeded toward his own quarters. As

he turned the corner he came face to face with Hugh, but the trapper, although he instantly recognized the man, strove to pass him without notice.

The Yankee, however, was not to be so easily thrust aside, and grasping Hugh by the arm he whiningly said, "How be ye, Hugh?"

"All right," replied the trapper testily, as he endeavored to pass on.

"Ever git any o' that money out o' th' swamp at Morristown?"

"Not a bit. I've a notion, though, that I might get some out o' the man that got it out o' me. I've thought sometimes if I ever got hold o' him I'd take it out o' him in one form or another." The trapper was evidently angry, but Simon Safford, ignoring the threat, laughed loudly.

"Pretty dry pickin' ye'd find these bones o' mine, I'm thinkin'," he chuckled. "I don't mind tellin' ye, though," he added slyly, "that I've found another an' a better way o' gettin' money than I did back there at Morristown."

"Keep it to yourself! No one else wants it!"

"Good reason why. Then ye won't join me, Hugh? Is that what ye say?"

“That’s what I said, and I meant ev’ry word!”

“Good for you! Just tell the lieutenant that, will ye, when ye go back?”

Hugh, however, broke angrily away without a word, and speedily passed out of sight. Simon Safford stopped and watched him, his face expanded in a broad grin and his pleasure evidently keen from the brief interview he had just had. “This never’ll do for me,” he said to himself as he prepared to pass on. “I most wish I’d stuck to it an’ made that young chap make it ten instead o’ six. Jerushy! I’ve a notion t’ go back neow an’ make him toe th’ line! I b’lieve he’d do it!” The man stopped and appeared to be about to go back; but the recollection of the quiet manner of the young officer was still strong, and apparently thinking better of the suggestion, he continued on his way toward his own quarters. “Three deown an’ three after I git back t’ camp,” he muttered. “How d’ I know he’ll live up t’ th’ bargain? ’Tis n’t likely he’ll show up here agin for a spell, even if he ever gits back. Well, every man t’ his work, and jest neow mine ’pears t’ be tol’ably plain. Guess I’d better ’tend t’ it right away to once!” His pace quickened

at the thought, and in a brief time he arrived at the hut where his own quarters were. Evidently he was relieved when he discovered that none of his comrades were within, and quickly he proceeded to unlock and open a small strong wooden box which was chained fast to the bottom of the bunk he occupied.

Hastily he searched the contents, and soon finding a small bottle he thrust it into his pocket, and then continued his search until he had found a small package which he also placed in the pocket with the bottle. As he prepared to lock the box and restore it to its place beneath the bunk, one of his comrades entered the room. For a moment he stopped as he perceived the man upon his knees, and then, striving to be jocular, he said, "Well, of all things! I never thought I'd find ye in that position, Simon. Goin' t' die? How long since ye began t' feel th' symptoms?"

Simon Safford hastily pushed the box into its place, and angrily facing the man, said, "You come here an' join me, Galusha!"

"I don' know as I care to, jest neow."

"Keep yer tongue where it b'longs, then."

"I was only jokin'. I did n't mean any harm," protested the man foolishly.

"Folks have got into trouble afore this from talkin' too much."

“I shan’t say a word, Simon. Only ye’ll have t’ own up it did look a bit” —

“Look here, Galusha!” demanded Simon Safford sternly, as he faced the man, “if ye want me t’ tell ye ’beout that dream o’ yours, just say so. I’ll” —

“I did n’t mean any harm. I was jest jokin’,” replied the man humbly.

“Well, some things is to be joked about and some’s not. Jest ye remember that, Galusha, an’ see that ye don’t forget it, neither,” retorted Simon, as he quickly departed from the hut.

It was evident that, whatever the feeling which the young lieutenant might have for him, there were those in the camp who looked upon him with a certain fear in their hearts, and among these were the men who shared his own hut.

But Simon Safford apparently banished all thoughts of the feelings of his comrades toward him as he passed swiftly down one street and up another and at last halted before the door of a hut which plainly belonged to some officers. There was no apparent fear, although his entire bearing had changed, when he rapped on the door, which was opened by Captain Martin himself. Appar-

ently the visitor was not unexpected, for the captain at once said, "Are you Simon Safford?"

"That's my name."

"Then this is for you," replied Captain Martin, as, without bidding his strange visitor to enter, he turned, and grasping a bundle, at once thrust it into Simon Safford's hands and prepared to shut the door.

"I say, Cap'n" — began the caller.

"Well, what is it, man?" demanded the captain, impatiently turning about and facing him.

"The lieutenant said six dollars — three deown an' three when I come back to ye" —

"That's all right. I agree to that."

"I've been thinkin' it over, an' it seems t' me it's worth more 'n that."

"What is it worth?"

"It's worth fifteen, an' cheap at that."

"Let me have that bundle!" demanded Captain Martin, holding forth his hand as he spoke. "You're too high-priced a man for what we want."

"Call it ten," responded Simon Safford, quickly backing away.

"Bring that bundle here! The guardhouse or the whipping-post" —

The face of Simon Safford turned to the color of ashes, and he whiningly said, "I did n't mean any harm, Cap'n ! I did n't, for a fact, an' that 's as sure as ye 're born ! I'll do it for six. I'll do it for nothin' ! I'll give ye a sixpence besides if ye won't make any fuss !"

"Be off with you, then !" said the captain sternly. "Whatever arrangement the lieutenant made with you we'll all live up to. But you'll have to be on your good behavior now."

The door of the hut was instantly closed, and Simon Safford, with a sigh of relief and slowly winking one eye as if he was signaling to himself, said, "That 's a close call ! But it 's worth every bit o' twenty dollars, and the cap'n was gettin' off cheap, if he only knew it, at fifteen. Oh, well, p'r'haps I'll strike some luck yet afore I get back t' camp. Least-wise, I'd rather be in my shoes than in that there young leftenant's. He'll learn a thing or two afore he 's done his trick, an' that 's jest as sure 's ye 're born, Simon Safford, an' there 's no mistake 'beout that, neither !" Apparently the man was acting upon the theory that his own misfortune was lessened by the increased peril of others. At all events, there was a

smirk of satisfaction on his lean countenance, as he leisurely proceeded toward the border of the camp, still carrying in his hand the peculiar bundle which he had received from Captain Martin, and unmindful of the smiles or meaning glances with which his coming was greeted by those who knew who he was.

As Simon Safford drew nearer the place he was seeking his manner changed, the simpering smile disappeared, and, although there was still the lurking keenness in his eyes, to all appearances he was simply an ordinary harmless member of the camp at Valley Forge. When he passed the sentries, he gave the countersign in such a manner that the guards had not the slightest suspicion that he was a man who had been selected for a difficult and delicate task.

When at last he had passed the outermost sentry and had entered the road that led he knew not where, his manner again changed and all the alertness and slyness returned. He was still clad in the uniform of the Continental soldier, and whatever the purpose in his mind was, it was evident that he was not to leave the service in which he was enlisted.

When he had advanced to a place about

three quarters of a mile beyond the outer guard, he began to glance keenly ahead for something or some one that he evidently expected to see. As he spied the entrance to a lane that led into the woods on his right his eyes became brighter, and he said aloud, "This is the place; it's just as he said. Well, so far, so good, and here I go. It's worth twenty-five dollars, though, and no mistake."

Simon Safford turned abruptly into the lane, after he had assured himself that no one was near to observe him, and he had not gone far before he began to run. His speed increased until he could hear in advance of him the noisy waters of a brook. His smile of satisfaction deepened as he ceased to run and began to proceed more slowly. In a brief time he came into a clearing and on the border could see an old mill built out over the waters of the stream. The quaint building was silent, however, and the only sound that could be heard was that of the stream near by.

"I guess he'll find I'm up in the mornin' with the best o' 'em," mused Simon Safford, as he leisurely approached the door of the mill. "It's worth thirty dollars, this trip is, and if he's the man I think he is he'll offer it t' me o' his own accord. He'll say,

‘Simon Safford, ye’re a man o’ a thousand.’ Maybe he’ll say, ‘Simon, I don’t b’lieve there’s a man in the whole camp, leavin’ out one, or two, or three, what’s got the brains you have got.’ An’ I guess that’s ’beout th’ state o’ the case, jest’s sure’s ye’re born. I should jest like t’ hear him say, ‘Simon, Simon Safford, here’s thirty-five dollars for ye, an’ ’t is n’t half ’nough for ye either, but it’s all I happen for t’ have abeout me jest at the present moment o’ time.’ An’ then I’ll say, ‘Never mind ’beout that jest now. I know it’s worth forty dollars, but ye can hand me th’ other five jest when it’s convenient for ye, that is, jest’s soon’s ye git it.’ ”

Simon Safford glanced up at the silent old mill, but there was nothing in the sight to alarm him, and as he slowly approached the door he resumed the conversation with himself. “Jerushy! I’d like t’ hear him talk like that. Neow jest ’spose he should say, ‘Simon, I’m goin’ for to make ye take fifty dollars, an’ it’s worth every dollar o’ it. Don’t ye draw back a minute, Simon! Jest take, it Simon’ ” —

“Simon!”

This time it was not the inner voice which he heard, but that of a man who had opened

the door of the mill and was standing before him. For a moment Simon Safford was tempted to turn and run. His colorless eyes were blazing with fear and his knees smote together. But quickly perceiving that it was Lieutenant Henry Miner before him, he recovered his wits and with apparent confidence entered the mill.

“Ye ’re ahead o’ time, Lieutenant.”

“No ; you ’re behind time. Get to work at once !”

This was not exactly the greeting he had been planning to receive, but there was something in the young officer’s manner that seemed to indicate that the time for talking was gone. Accordingly, without a word of protest Simon Safford placed his bundle on the floor and then took from his pocket the package and bottle he had brought. A small goose-quill brush was also produced, and as soon as he had secured some water from the brook, he said, “I guess we ’re about ready to begin.”

Henry Miner at once removed his hat, and seating himself on the edge of a bin, bade his companion proceed. And Simon Safford was ready. With his brush, which he dipped from time to time in the mixtures before him, he soon produced under the left eye of the young

officer the semblance of a great scar that not only changed the good looks of the young man, but altered the very expression of his face as well. The likenesses of deep lines in his forehead were next made, and these were added to by lines about the mouth and down the cheeks also. Then the nose was made of another color from its natural tint, the very eyelashes were changed in color, and the dark brown hair was soon streaked with gray. Instead of a youthful officer of twenty-one, he now might easily pass for a man in middle life, and so skillfully had Simon Safford done his work that it is doubtful if Henry Miner's most intimate friends would have recognized him without the closest scrutiny.

"Now I'll don these, if you please," said Henry.

And from the bundle which Simon Safford had brought was taken a somewhat faded and dilapidated uniform which some redcoat had cast away. In a brief time the young lieutenant was clad in the garments of his foes, and the disguise was apparently complete.

CHAPTER XXVI

A PUZZLING PRISONER

“Now, Simon,” said the young lieutenant when at last he was prepared to depart, “you are to stay here for an hour” —

“And you’ll bring me the money then?”

“I am to give you half of it now and the other half you will receive from Captain Martin when you report to him in camp.”

Simon Safford’s countenance fell at the words, but he said nothing when the money was thrust into his hand. He remained standing in the doorway until his recent companion disappeared in the rough road that led through the forest. Then for the first time he glanced down at the money he had received, and an exclamation of disgust escaped his lips when he perceived what the sum was.

“Three dollars!” he exclaimed angrily, “and it was worth fifty-five! I think I’ll follow the young man and explain to him that he has made a mistake.”

Ignoring the directions he had received, he instantly started in pursuit of the young lieutenant. It was now mid-afternoon and there were indications of a coming storm, for the air was chill and the low gray clouds appeared to be threatening. Simon Safford increased the pace at which he was moving and soon arrived at the place where the lane joined the road that led to the camp at Valley Forge. But not a glimpse had he obtained of the young officer.

Suddenly he stopped and peered intently before him. A body of a dozen or more soldiers could be seen approaching, moving in the same direction in which he himself was planning to go. Evidently they were friends, he concluded, and he was about to slip forth into the road and join them when he was startled at beholding a man leap over the fence near him and step forth into the road. A single glance was sufficient to convince him that it was the disguised lieutenant, and he was about to hail him when he perceived that Henry also had discovered the approaching soldiers. The purpose which the young officer had had in assuming his disguise had not been explained to him, but Simon Safford had shrewdly suspected that he was about to try

to enter Philadelphia, and by mingling with the redcoats there strive to obtain some information which would be useful to the leaders in the American camp. He had heard of similar attempts having been made before this time, and that the daring young officer was about to follow the plans of others he not unnaturally concluded. But he would at least not desire to be seen by his own comrades in his present disguise, he thought, and yet if he had not perceived just who the approaching men were his difficulties would be increased. He resolved to warn him, and raising his voice he called, "Lieutenant! Don't you see who those men are?"

Startled by the unexpected hail, the disguised officer turned sharply about and ran toward the place where Simon Safford was standing. As soon as he perceived who had spoken he angrily drew his pistol and said in a low voice, "You rascal! Did n't I order you not to leave the mill for an hour? What are you doing here?"

"Why — why, Lieutenant" — stammered Simon Safford, taken aback by the sharp words of Henry.

"Now, about face!" demanded Henry sharply, "and if you have any desire to keep

your brains where they belong, go back to the mill! Do as I tell you!"

There was no disputing the command, and the man turned and began to run swiftly in the direction in which he had been bidden to go. A momentary smile appeared on the face of the young lieutenant as he watched the awkward movements of the ungainly man, whose long legs and arms were performing marvelous feats as their owner wildly darted down the lane.

Assured that Simon Safford was doing as he had been bidden, Henry turned again into the road and glanced keenly at the approaching men. So absorbed was he in the sight that he failed to look again in the direction in which the Yankee had departed, and so was not aware that his recent companion soon lessened his speed and in a few moments stopped, and once more, though with increasing caution, began to return to the roadside.

"That's a great way to get rid of paying me that sixty dollars he owes me," muttered Simon Safford to himself. "I'll jest go back and tell those men all about it. If they help me I'll give ev'ry one o' 'em a shillin'. No, let me see, that'll be — twelve times one is twelve — that'll be twelve shillin's! I can't afford

that, but I'll give 'em a dollar an' they can divide it up to suit themselves. I'm not a-goin' to let that sixty-five dollars slip out o' my hands by any such trick's that. No, sir!"

Simon Safford was now standing behind one of the great trees near the border of the forest and was able to see clearly what was occurring in the road. He took pains, however, to keep himself well out of the sight of any passer-by, but his interest and astonishment were soon so keen that for the time even the amount due him for his recent services was ignored.

"What's the fellow up to, anyheow?" he muttered to himself, as he watched the movements of the disguised lieutenant.

And indeed there was much to puzzle him in the actions of the young lieutenant, for Henry Miner, as soon as he had convinced himself that the approaching men were really soldiers of the American army, began to change his actions and even his very bearing. Drawing his hat down over his eyes and assuming an air of indifference, he waited for the men to approach. His presence had already been discovered, and evidently had created a feeling of strong interest among the men. Simon

Safford could see that they were holding their guns in readiness for instant use and that they were keenly watching the man before them, though he was evidently not making any attempt to escape.

At last, when they were within a few yards of the place where he was standing, the entire force halted and the sergeant in command hailed the stranger.

"Who are you? What are you doing here? Give an account of yourself," he demanded.

Simon Safford could hear the words distinctly, and he turned excitedly to hear what Henry would say in reply.

"Waitin' for you," drawled the young lieutenant.

"Well, here we are," laughed the sergeant rudely. "We're looking for redcoats, but I must say I did n't expect to find 'em waiting for us like this."

Apparently for the first time the lieutenant became aware of the character of the men before him. He stared stupidly, an action that seemed to delight them greatly, and then he said slowly, "Rebels? Are you rebels?"

There was a loud laugh now from the men as the sergeant said, "No, we are n't rebels,

but good soldiers of the Colonies. There are a good many more like us, and we'll show you where they are if you'll come with us." Simon Safford expected that Henry would certainly declare himself now, but to his intense surprise the disguised young officer straightened up and appeared as if he was about to run. He glanced hastily about him in all directions as if he was seeking some avenue of escape, an action which caused the sergeant to say hastily to his followers, "Get him, men! Tie his hands behind him!"

Instantly a half dozen rushed upon Henry, and even if he had been minded to run, the opportunity was lost. Soon his hands were securely bound behind him, he was placed in the midst of the body, and at the word of the leader the march was resumed and they were all again on their way toward Valley Forge.

Simon Safford could hardly trust the evidences of his own senses. That the young officer would explain who he was and pass the men he had confidently believed. But Henry had not even made an effort to conceal himself. There was a huge blunder somewhere, which doubtless would be set right when they returned to camp, but for the present it certainly was puzzling to Simon.

Suddenly he chuckled as he said to himself, "Maybe he'll be glad to have me on hand to help explain things. I'll take after 'em, and just as soon as I've told 'em who he is, I'm thinkin' he'll be glad to hand over that seventy dollars he owes me. And cheap enough at that, too!" he added. "Next time he won't be quite so fierce to draw his pistol on me. He'll find out that Simon Safford knows a thing or two!"

Acting upon the impulse the man started swiftly in the direction in which the party with their prisoner had disappeared. He exerted himself to his utmost, and flung out his long arms as he ran, as if he was striving to propel himself by them instead of by the proper means which nature had bestowed upon him. His speed increased when, as he came to the summit of a low hill, he perceived the party he was following in the valley below.

His face was flushed nearly to the color of the scanty hair upon his head, his breathing was labored, and his general appearance was almost like that of a wild man, when at last he drew sufficiently near to enable him to make himself heard.

"Look here, Sergeant," he shouted, "ye've made a mistake!"

The leader instantly halted at the unexpected hail, and turned about to face the man. There was an expression of anger and disgust upon the prisoner's face, but the men were all too excited to note it, and Simon Safford was too intent upon his purpose to heed.

"Who are you? What do you mean?" demanded the sergeant, as he noted that the man wore the uniform of a Continental soldier.

"Ye've got th' wrong man there," puffed Simon Safford.

"What do you know about it?"

"I guess I ought t' know," said Simon, still breathing with difficulty. "He owes me seventy-five dollars" —

A loud laugh interrupted his words, and the sergeant turned to Henry and said, "Do you owe this man anything?"

"Not a dollar," responded the disguised lieutenant sharply. "I don't deal with men who are drunk or crazy."

"Now look here, my man," said the sergeant to Simon Safford, "you take yourself off, or we'll land you in the guardhouse."

"But I'm tellin' ye th' truth," protested Simon. "That isn't a redcoat ye've got there. It's Lieu" —

The prisoner's eyes glittered for a moment as he broke in, saying, "Sergeant, we don't treat our prisoners in this way in Philadelphia. We don't stop to let every drunken idiot abuse them on the street. If I owe this man anything he knows where he can make his claim."

"Be off with you!" shouted the sergeant to Simon. "Make yourself scarce, or you'll find yourself in the guardhouse along with this redcoat." He abruptly gave the word for the party to resume their march, and Simon Safford was left staring stupidly at the departing men as if he were not able fully to comprehend what had been said to him.

At last, apparently recovering in part his ability to breathe, and realizing that his well-meant attempt to help had been met with a rebuff from the prisoner, as well as from his captors, he slowly continued on his way to the camp, muttering to himself, "That's a fine way to treat his friends, and he owin' me eighty-five dollars, too!"

Simon Safford was still brooding over his wrongs when he entered the camp. He made his way to his hut and restored the packages he had brought with him to their place in the box beneath his bunk; but when he had

seated himself in the room, for a long time he remained with his face resting upon his hands, striving to find some solution for the perplexing problem. When two hours had elapsed the mystery was still as dark as it had been when he returned.

The scanty supper had been served, and Simon found that he was not to go on guard until midnight. He was still meditating over his wrongs when it suddenly occurred to him that he had been bidden to report to Captain Martin, who was to pay him the sum which Henry Miner had declared was due him. Instantly he started for the captain's quarters, and greatly to his elation he was at once admitted into his presence.

"You did your work, I fancy," began the captain, "and have come for your money."

"It is n't that alone," said Simon hesitatingly. "But the lieutenant's in trouble, Captain."

"Is that so?" Captain Martin spoke slowly, but his glance was keen as he looked at the man.

"Yes, sir, Captain," continued Simon more boldly. "He's a prisoner here in our own camp. I did my best to help him. I fought 'em off for an hour, but they finally got him

away. Then I tried to explain heow 't was, but they would n't listen to a word."

"It was a noble fight," said Captain Martin glibly.

"I done my best."

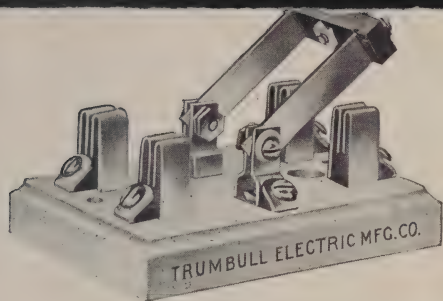
"Now let me tell you something for your own benefit. Lieutenant Miner is n't a prisoner here in Valley Forge. Indeed, he is n't in Valley Forge at all."

"But I saw him with my own eyes," began Simon. "I" —

"Do you dispute my word?" demanded the captain in apparent anger.

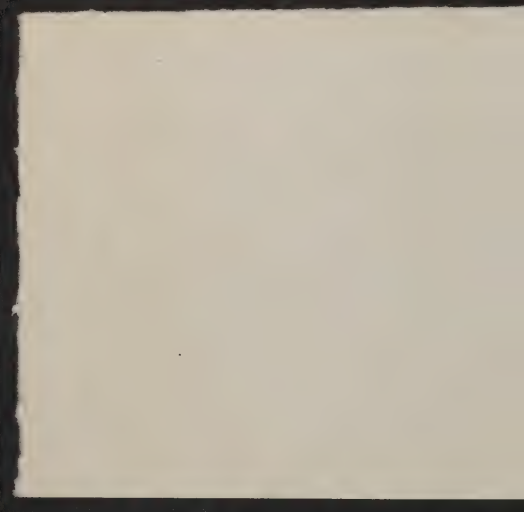
"No. No, sir. I — I" —

"He is n't here. Perhaps you deceived yourself. And furthermore, we've a whipping-post for men whose tongues wag too freely. Lieutenant Miner is not here, and I know whereof I am speaking. And you will not speak of your mistake to any one!"



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CHAPTER XXVII

THE DEPARTURE

WHEN Captain Martin had declared that Lieutenant Henry Miner was not a prisoner in Valley Forge he had spoken truly, for at that very time the young officer, still clad in the cast-off garments of some redcoated soldier, was at least five miles beyond the borders of the camp. With ten other men clad in similar uniforms, and all guarded by a force of twenty Continental soldiers, he was marching steadily in the direction of the place whither Congress had fled, and where the few prisoners whom the American army had secured were kept.

Although Captain Martin was aware of this fact, his vague statement only served to increase the confusion in Simon Safford's mind, but it is to be questioned if his mind would have been cleared had the captain told him of that which he himself knew.

"I think ye 're mistaken, Captain," he ventured to remark, "for I see him with my own eyes. And he was a prisoner, too. I'd

fixed him up so that his own mother would have taken him for a redcoat, and 't was only nat'ral that the sergeant should 'a' been deceived; but when I tried to explain how 't was, the' would n't any o' 'em listen t' me, not even the lieutenant himself. I know what I'm talkin' 'beout, Cap'n," he added eagerly. "I did n't want t' see the young man get into trouble."

Captain Martin had stood while Simon Safford was speaking, and there was a slight smile on his lips, although the expression of his face was stern. When the man stopped for a moment he said quietly, "I owe you some money, I think. You earned it, and I have no doubt you did your part well."

"Yes, sir! Yes, sir!" responded Simon quickly. "He did say as how you'd pay me the rest o' the eighty" —

"Eight? I thought it was six dollars you were to have."

"I believe he did say six," replied Simon Safford humbly.

"And you have received three?"

"Yes, sir."

"Here 's the balance, then," said the captain, as he held forth the money. As Simon took it, he added, "Now you have received

what was due you for your help. But there may be more coming to you."

"Yes, sir! Yes, sir! I understood that."

"If you speak of what you have done, or even tell of what in your foolishness you think happened to Lieutenant Miner, you shall have the full measure of lashes due you!" The captain spoke sternly, but as he saw the astonishment and perplexity of the man before him he added in a more kindly way, "You may have made a mistake, Simon. You may have disguised the young man so completely that even you yourself may have been deceived. You cannot be positive that the man you saw brought back to camp was the same one you had fixed up. It was only a natural mistake, and no one will blame you for it; but it is one of those things you are not to speak of to any one! To any one, you understand!" he added with increasing severity.

"Yes, sir, I understand. That is, I don't just see" — began Simon.

"Very well. Then my hint will be sufficient. Good evening."

Finding himself thus dismissed, Simon Safford at once departed from the hut. But his thoughts were strangely confused. The threat

of the captain and his suggestion as to the mistake that might have been made were mingled with a sense of mortification and chagrin. It was still early in the evening, and the snow which now was lightly falling made the outlines of the camp somewhat clear and distinct.

As he walked on toward his own quarters he found himself on the street where the trapper's hut was, and at once, unmindful of the warning words of Captain Martin, he resolved to seek him out and learn from him, if possible, where Henry Miner was, for curiosity was not the least of the elements in the makeup of the mind of the strange man.

In a brief time he found Hugh and at once demanded of him, "Where's that young lieutenant o' yours?"

"You'll have to ask him," replied Hugh dryly.

"Don't ye know where he is?"

"I know he is n't here."

"When'll he be back?"

"I can't say."

"He'll be back pretty soon, won't he?"

"What do you want to know for? What is it to you, any way?" demanded Hugh gruffly.

"Oh, I did n't mean anything wrong. He and I just had a little matter o' business between us. 'T was n't anything like findin' that gold in the swamp," he added, chuckling as he perceived Hugh wince under the reference. "He just happens for t' owe me eighty-five dollars — no — let's see — he paid me three, so it's only eighty-two dollars he owes me now. You don't happen t' have that amount o' money 'round, do ye?"

"Owes you eighty-five dollars?" said the trapper slowly.

"That's what I said."

"I don't believe it."

"That's not so strange," acknowledged the irrepressible Simon. "Seems kind o' queer t' me myself. Most too good t' be true, so t' speak."

"Well, if the lieutenant owes you that much money, then all I have to say is that you must get it of him yourself."

"That's just what I come for. When'll he be back?"

"I told you that I didn't know; but I don't mind tellin' you that I expect him some time between now and next summer."

"Come neow, Hugh, be honest with me. I did n't mean for t' throw up that affair o' the

swamp, an' I don't mind sayin' that when he pays me the rest o' that ninety dollars, I'll give you a part o' it. Neow, when is he expected back here?"

"Won't you say anything to any one if I tell you?"

"No, I won't."

"Not even to your messmates?"

"Tell *them*? Well, I rather guess not! Not if I know myself!"

"Nor any one else?" demanded Hugh soberly.

"Nobody!"

"Then I don't mind tellin' you all I know 'bout it. Now, mind ye promise not t' tell a soul in Valley Forge," he added warningly.

"Not a soul," eagerly assented Simon Safford.

"Well then," began Hugh, his voice sinking to a whisper and his body leaning forward as he spoke, "I haven't the leaat idea."

Simon Safford stared stupidly into the trapper's face, but when Hugh broke into a loud laugh, he turned angrily away, nor did he once glance behind him until he had arrived at his own quarters. He hastily entered, and disregarding his comrades, cast himself upon his bunk, nor did he move until he was sum-

moned for his nightly duty as picket. Then in the midst of the storm he endeavored to protect himself, but he was more mindful of the perplexing question still unsolved in his mind than he was even of his stormy surroundings.

Meanwhile, the little force of Continentals with their eleven prisoners, of whom Lieutenant Henry Miner was one, had been marching steadily until late in the evening. Henry was aware that the few prisoners whom the American army had secured were not kept in the camp at Valley Forge, and therefore when he was ordered to join the few stragglers that had recently been secured, and set forth from the camp, the order was no source of surprise to him. Indeed, if any of his captors had looked keenly at him he might have been surprised at the apparent cheerfulness with which he received the order. He even glanced slyly at two of the men whom he well knew, to see if they showed any signs of recognizing him, and when he was convinced that no one suspected him of being other than that which he appeared to be, there was even a gleam of satisfaction to be seen on his face.

And yet the circumstances might well have been deemed strange. Here he was a prisoner

in the army of which he was one of the junior officers, and doubtless a word would have set him free. But somehow the word was not spoken, and when the little force departed from the camp he appeared to be fully contented as he marched in the very midst of the prisoners. Certainly it was strange that he should be there, and stranger still that he should be so content.

A careful lookout was maintained, for prowling bands of foragers were known to be in the vicinity, and even an attempt to rescue the prisoners might be made if their expedition was known to the soldiers in Philadelphia.

At dusk, when the party halted at a lonely farmhouse, no news had been received of any peril, and while the women served the men with such homely fare as the farm afforded, the prisoners endeavored to converse among themselves, but were sternly ordered to be silent.

The march was soon resumed, but when the snow began to fall and the signs of a coming storm increased, it was decided to push forward until a place of shelter for the night could be secured. Such a place was found a few miles farther on, and evidently assured of their welcome from the people who

dwelt on the farm where the halt was made, the force was divided so that a part might secure the shelter of one barn while the other part sought another. The prisoners also were divided into two divisions, and when guards had been stationed they were told that they might rest for the night.

Henry found himself in the loft of the barn with four other prisoners, and soon stretched himself upon the hay to secure such sleep as might be had, but his companions were asleep before his own eyes closed. The events of the day had been such that they were not easily banished from his thoughts, and the very place in which he now found himself was of itself sufficient to make him fully mindful of his peril. At last, however, sleep came to him, and he was breathing as deeply and regularly as his companions sleeping by his side.

It was still dark when he was awakened by the voice of some one near him. Although he was not able to see any one at first, he could distinctly hear the whispered words.

"There's another party in the yard," some one said.

"How many?"

"I counted ten."

"Redcoats?"

"I can't tell. They've halted in front o' the house. I thought I'd report."

The conversation ceased, and from the sounds Henry concluded that at least two men were creeping from the loft. He had no difficulty in understanding that one of the men on guard had come to report to the officer in command the discovery he had made.

Henry was wide awake now and intensely excited. Whether or not others had been awakened by the whispered conversation he had no means of knowing. For a brief time he remained quiet and listened intently. The regular breathing of at least a part of the men could still be heard, and the wind as it swept past the barn was shrill and strong. But not a sound of the men outside could he hear.

Suddenly he felt rather than heard one of the men nearest him beginning to slide slowly from his position on the hay. It was one of the prisoners, he instantly concluded, and although he himself was counted among their number he quickly decided to try to thwart the man's attempt. For a brief moment he hesitated whether he should seize him or call out that some one was trying to escape. The rude ladder that led to the floor below was

on the opposite side of the hayloft, and there the man must go before he could gain the exit from the place. If he could quietly gain the top of the ladder before the other, he might be able to prevent the escape without creating a disturbance that would alarm the men outside the barn, and instantly acting upon the suggestion he, too, began to crawl upon his hands and knees toward the ladder.

Several times he was compelled to pause in his efforts when he came in contact with the body of some sleeping man, but as it became apparent that the sleeper was not easily disturbed, he resumed his efforts, and in a brief time gained the open spot where the top of the ladder was placed. A hasty examination revealed the fact that the ladder had been removed from its place and that the only method of descent was to drop to the floor below. Such an action, though it was not dangerous, for the distance was not more than seven or eight feet, would be certain to arouse the guards below, and Henry was about to turn back, assured that the prisoner would be unable to escape, when suddenly he felt some one by his side. The other man was also aware of Henry's presence now, and for a moment neither moved nor spoke.

“Who’s outside?” whispered the strange man.

“I don’t know,” whispered Henry in reply.

“I’m going to find out,” said the other.

Instantly Henry seized him, hardly aware of what he was doing, and in the struggle both fell together through the open place to the floor below. Instantly there was an outcry and a rush of men from within and without the barn to the place where the two had fallen.

CHAPTER XXVIII

WITHIN THE STOCKADE

FOR a brief moment there was a scene of indescribable confusion in the barn. The calls of the officers, the noise of men outside the doors, and the movements of the men within all added to the excitement. In the midst of it all two more of the prisoners hastily crawled to the spot where the top of the ladder had been resting and fell together to the floor below.

Henry, for a moment partly stunned by the force with which he had struck the floor, quickly recovered, and, convinced that he was in no wise injured by his mishap, had seized the body of the man nearest him, and in the darkness was holding him fast, despite his desperate efforts to free himself.

The officer in command had been loudly calling for lights to be brought, and as soon as these had been produced and he had stationed some of his followers in front of the great doors in order that they might be pre-

pared for any rush that might be made, he ordered these doors to be opened, and the light fell full upon the faces of the prisoners on the floor. Even then Henry did not relax his hold upon his man, and the efforts of two soldiers were required to separate them.

“What’s the trouble? What’s the cause of all this?” demanded the officer sternly, after his men had entered and surrounded the four prisoners.

Not one of them was able to make any reply, although the question was twice repeated. The prisoners stared stupidly at one another, but still no one spoke.

“Well, ’t was fortunate for us that you happened to stop here, Captain,” said the officer to one of the men outside the barn. “It looks very much as if these men were trying to break loose. But we’ve stopped any trick they may have had, and ’t will be all the worse for them. I thought they might care for a little sleep, but it seems they’re not anxious for it. We’ll put out again right away. The sooner they’re turned over the better it will be for all concerned.”

As soon as he had spoken the officer departed from the barn and summoned the other party in the adjoining building, and prepara-

tions were at once made for resuming the march. The storm had by this time subsided, and it was possible for the party to see all about them. A part of the force which had arrived at the farmhouse and indirectly been the cause of the confusion was left to lend additional strength to the little body of troops in whose care the prisoners were, and afterwards the young lieutenant learned that these men had come from the very place to which he and his fellow prisoners were being conducted and had been on their way to Valley Forge. They had been aware that a party from the American camp was likely to be met on the way, and accordingly had not been surprised when their presence at the old farmhouse had been discovered.

When the march was resumed and Lieutenant Henry Miner with his closely guarded companions had been three hours on the way, the light appeared in the eastern sky, and a halt was ordered for breakfast. It was evident that there were certain well-known places on the route where halts were made and provisions could be secured, and before the destination was gained even the very signals that it was safe to approach became known to the disguised young prisoner.

On the third day, without any further mishaps, which was due doubtless in part to the fact that added precautions had been taken after the occurrence in the barn, the party arrived at the place they were seeking. It was the first time Henry had ever been there, and he looked about him with interest, but no time was afforded him in which to make observations, for the prisoners were at once conducted to a large fence, or stockade, and no information was required to show that this was the very place where the few prisoners secured by the American soldiers were confined.

It was a cold winter day, and the cheerless aspect for a moment caused even the heart of the hardy young lieutenant to misgive him. Had his purpose been a reckless one? Had he been wise to listen to the suggestion of Captain Martin?

At Valley Forge, in spite of the scantiness of the supplies, at least there was a measure of liberty, but once shut in behind the gloomy stockade, even that would be gone. The gray skies, the chill air, the very appearance of the men, all served to increase the feeling of depression in his heart, and it was only by a strong effort of his will that he was enabled to disguise his real feelings.

As the prisoners were turned over to the officials in charge, their names were registered, and each checked off to correspond to the list that had been sent. Henry had been listlessly watching the proceedings, hardly aware that they in any way concerned himself, when he saw a man approaching dressed in the uniform of a Continental colonel. Even his arrival seemed to arouse no interest among the prisoners, not even when he took the list of names and glanced searchingly at it.

Apparently satisfied, the colonel returned the list, speaking as he did so in a low voice to the officer and then turning abruptly away. The prisoners were then led in single file to the gate and one by one passed through to the enclosed yard. Henry Miner was the last man in the line, and as he drew near, the officer in command touched him lightly on the shoulder, saying in a low voice, "Travis, the colonel wants to speak to you."

Henry looked up quickly at the words, but stared blankly at the man.

"The colonel wants to speak to you," repeated the officer. "You're to come with me." The man shut and barred the gate and then turned to Henry. For a moment his assertion had been without meaning to Henry,

until suddenly it flashed into his mind that "Travis" had been the name which Captain Martin had explained was to be assumed by him while he was a prisoner. And in his depression he had even forgotten it. The thought served to rouse him, and striving to act the part assigned him, he quietly followed the man, who soon conducted him into the presence of the colonel and at once withdrew.

Henry found that he was now alone with the officer, who was keenly watching him, and for a brief time was silent. At last he said, "And so you have been made a prisoner, have you?"

"Yes, sir," replied the young lieutenant humbly.

"In what battle?"

"I don't think it was in any battle."

"You don't?"

"Yes, sir; that is, I was in the fight at Germantown."

"So you were. So you were. General Grant in particular lost a good many of his men by capture. Of course you were one of his men?"

"No, sir, I was one of" —

"You are mistaken," said the colonel

sharply. "This letter from Captain Martin which I am holding in my hand," and as he spoke the colonel held up to view the letter to which he had referred, "distinctly states that you were under General Grant. Captain Martin knows, does he not?"

"Yes, sir, I think he does," replied Henry, smiling slightly.

"Very well. You doubtless were wounded in that battle, for I see that you have a deep scar under one eye."

Henry bowed but did not speak. He was somewhat puzzled to understand just what it was that the colonel was striving to do. His manner as well as his questions were not of the kind he had expected.

"You have entirely recovered, I trust, from the effect of that wound?" continued the colonel.

"Yes, sir."

"And are as strong as you were before the battle?"

"I think so."

"Don't you know so?" said the colonel sharply.

"Yes, sir."

"That's better. You understand, I suppose, that the prisoners here don't live upon

the fat of the land, though I can tell you that we treat them with much more grace than our poor fellows receive in your sugar-houses in New York."

"Yes, sir."

"Of course, I'm not blaming you for what your men have done," said the officer blandly, and Henry even thought he discovered a twinkle lurking in his eyes as he spoke. "But a prisoner's fare is not the best anywhere. Still, it can be mitigated somewhat. Have you any money?"

"No, sir."

"Then here is a little for you. I don't want to see even my worst enemy suffer." The colonel held forth a few pieces of coin, and as the prisoner hesitated he said shortly, "Take them. You'll find you may need them, and you'll know how to use them as they ought to be used. Perhaps you'll want more before you're done with it." Puzzled to understand what it all meant, Henry took the money and placed it in his pocket, but before many days had elapsed he clearly perceived the reason for the colonel's action.

"Now then," said the colonel, referring again to the letter of Captain Martin, "let me see. Your name is Miner, is it not?"

"Yes, sir."

"What!"

"Travis, I mean," said Henry hastily, in confusion.

"Strange that a man should forget his own name."

"I did n't forget," said Henry in confusion. "I thought" —

"Don't forget again. If any one should suspect you of resembling Lieutenant Henry Miner, whose family I chance to know quite well, it would be a misfortune for all concerned. You doubtless know the lieutenant?"

Henry made no response, for the colonel's manner was still puzzling.

"It might be well for you not to know who I am when I chance to make the rounds of the yard," suggested the colonel.

"Yes, sir."

"And if you have anything to communicate to me — any complaints as to your treatment, or anything that is wrong in the yard — it will be better for you to speak directly to the guards. They will report all such matters to me, and I can then personally see to it that they are adjusted."

"Yes, sir."

"I need not assure you that we look upon

your being received here among our prisoners as a matter of considerable importance. We have come to a time when we simply must — You understand what I mean?" said the colonel, breaking off abruptly.

"I think I do."

"It requires a keen wit and a quick response."

Henry bowed, but did not speak.

"And a man who is cool and does not lose his head in a crisis."

Once more the young lieutenant bowed slightly.

"Captain Martin has assured me that you are the very man for us. You can readily understand why we were not able to use any of our men here, and had to send to Valley Forge. I look upon the work you have to do as of supreme importance at this time. You may succeed or you may fail. Much will depend upon circumstances, but more upon yourself, and it is a task in which no one can aid you directly. Keep your suspicions to yourself and don't report to me until you have something definite to say. We have no time, and less inclination, for mere suspicions. In fact, all I can say to you now is that you must depend entirely upon yourself. I shall

not be unmindful of your personal peril, and shall do all that lies within my power to protect you, but that little is almost nothing. If you are successful you without doubt will be treated as all successful men are, and if you fail you must not be disappointed if your failure is misunderstood and you suffer its natural (or unnatural) consequences."

The colonel had risen while he was speaking, and his evident seriousness deeply impressed the young lieutenant. "I'll do my best, Colonel," he said simply.

"To be sure you will. Now you must take your place among your fellow prisoners." Stepping to the door the colonel summoned an orderly, to whom he said, "Take this prisoner to the yard. Don't let him get away from you!" Without another word the colonel resumed his place at his table and Henry Miner followed the man in whose care he had been placed, as he led the way to the stockade.

In a brief time he was admitted and conducted by one of the guards to the rude little hut he was to occupy with several of his fellows. These quarters were arranged within the stockade, and it was evident that a measure of liberty was given the men, for as Henry followed his guide he could see that groups

were huddled about a fire of burning logs and that no particular order seemed to be observed in the makeup of these assemblies.

As soon as he had entered the hut which was to provide a shelter for him, he arranged his few belongings and then at once went forth to strive to mingle with the men who were his fellow-sufferers. He had advanced, however, but a few yards when to his intense consternation he perceived that one of the men who were approaching was Jack Lippard himself. Simon Safford's paint was hardly able to conceal the pallor that spread over the young lieutenant's face at the sight, and for a moment he could not decide what to do. His problem was speedily solved for him, and by the prisoner, John Lippard, himself.

CHAPTER XXIX

IN STRANGE COMPANY

THE young lieutenant partly turned away his face when John Lippard approached, but he restrained his impulse to run, assuring himself that by such action he would only increase suspicion and draw additional attention to himself. Trembling with excitement he waited for the man to approach, and his voice was as unnatural as his general appearance when he replied to the question which John Lippard asked him when he stopped, apparently impressed by the fact that a new-comer had been added to the number of the men confined within the stockade.

"Just come?" inquired John Lippard.

"Yes," replied Henry.

"How did you happen to be taken?"

"Picked up by a party of the rebels. I was too near Valley Forge."

John Lippard laughed good-naturedly as he said, "Oh, well, never mind. It's not so bad, that is, if you happen to have a little money about you."

Henry did not feel called upon to explain that he had a small amount about his person, although the statement of Jack Lippard somehow coincided with the words of the colonel. He was too deeply interested in his effort to discover whether or not the man had recognized him. Surprised as he had been by the presence of his enemy among the prisoners, and dismayed by the unexpected meeting, he quickly recalled the statement of Captain Martin that the man had been sent there with others that had been captured and that justice would soon be done him. There was nothing in the manner of Jack Lippard to indicate that he had recognized the new prisoner, or was in any way suspicious of him, and made somewhat bolder by the fact Henry resolved to ask him a few questions himself.

“Been here long?” he inquired.

“Longer than I meant to be,” laughed John Lippard.

“Expect to be exchanged?”

“Exchanged? No! I’ll never be exchanged.”

“I don’t understand.”

“That’s not strange. Perhaps when you’ve been here a week or two you’ll know more about it.”

Without waiting to continue the conversation John Lippard passed on, nor did Henry see him again until several days had elapsed. His words, however, remained in his mind and increased his eagerness to be about the task which had been assigned him.

Through the weeks that had elapsed since the disastrous engagement at Germantown, the leaders of the American forces had been increasingly perplexed by the continuous losses which had occurred among the few prisoners they had secured. Every two or three days some of the men would be missed, and despite the fact that additional precautions were taken to guard them, the losses still continued. There was no break in the stockade, no holes were dug beneath it; it was impossible for the confined men to climb the fence without being seen by the guards, and as the character of the men to whom that specific duty was assigned was known to be of the very best, the mysterious disappearance of the prisoners continued to puzzle and trouble those who had charge of them.

Conferences had been held to discuss the matter; various expedients had been adopted, — but the disappearances continued, and it seemed to be well-nigh impossible to discover

the means of escaping which were employed by the captured redcoats.

It had been the suggestion of Captain Martin himself that some trusty man should be disguised as a redcoat, and after he had been made a prisoner that he should be confined within the stockade and, left to his own devices, should endeavor to learn how the British soldiers escaped from the prison yard.

And the young lieutenant, Henry Miner, had been selected for this difficult task. It certainly had not been of his own choosing, but the need of securing the desired knowledge was so great and the urgency of Captain Martin had been so keen that he had yielded a reluctant consent, and as a result now found himself in the yard in the midst of the prisoners. The words of Jack Lippard had implied, therefore, more to the young lieutenant than perhaps they would to an ordinary prisoner, but although they had increased his conviction that there was some understanding among the men, they had not given him any further insight into what the scheme itself might be. But his determination to do his best had been strengthened, and he decided to do his utmost and to begin at once.

His best efforts, however, seemed to be

doomed to failure. The men were not unfriendly, but although he strove to lead some of them on to talk of the escape of their companions, apparently all that any one knew was that some of the men had gone. As if to increase his confusion it came to pass that for a week not one escape was reported. The men seemed to be reasonably content with their lot and indifferent to the question of release.

On the second day of his confinement Henry discovered the purpose for which the money had been given him. Late in the afternoon of that day an old woman, bent with age and apparently feeble, was permitted to enter the yard. On her arm she carried a basket filled with food which she herself had prepared, and this she disposed of among the men for small sums. As the prisoners' fare, although better than that which was given the soldiers in Washington's army, was somewhat scanty, the few men who were possessed of any money were thereby enabled to better their lot somewhat, and Henry Miner was quick to respond to her offer to dispose of some of her wares to him.

Her appearance had made him suspicious at first that her errand was more than that of merely providing food, but when he learned that her visits were of almost daily occurrence

and that she had free access to the yard his suspicions were somewhat relieved. Then, too, her appearance was that of a feeble old woman, and as she hobbled about the yard he perceived that the treatment she received at the hands of the men was merely that of good-natured respect. Her age and feebleness alike seemed to appeal to the men almost as much as did the viands in her basket.

One of the prisoners had explained to Henry that the old woman had a son who had been serving under Clinton and had been a prisoner in that very yard, but she herself was very bitter about it and had declared, even in his own presence, that she "would rather have seen him hanged than a soldier among the redcoats."

"She does n't appear to object to selling us something to eat," Henry had laughingly suggested.

"That's just business. She'd take our money as quick as any," the prisoner had responded. "And I don't suppose the rebels object to her feeding us as long as we can pay for it. If what I hear is true, I've an idea that they have about all they want to do just to feed themselves, not to say anything of feeding us."

"How long do you think we'll be kept here?"

"Only just till General Clinton can get his hands on the fox."¹

"I don't want to stay here till then."

"Why don't you leave, then?" demanded the man laughingly. "Some have n't stayed for that."

"I'd like to, but I don't know how to get out."

"I can't tell you, for I don't know myself how they went. But they got away, though, for all that, if reports are true."

There was nothing to be learned from the man and his suspicions of the old woman were quieted. The problem was apparently no nearer solution than when first he had been admitted into the yard. He had seen John Lippard several times, but apparently the man had no interest in him, and Henry was too certain of Jack's shrewdness and too uncertain of his own disguise to venture to follow him up, although somehow he was convinced that he would be able to give all the information he so greatly desired to obtain.

Another week elapsed, and still Henry had

¹ General Washington was commonly known in the British army at this time as "the fox."

not been able to discover any secret understanding among the prisoners, and, strange to say, there had not been one escape reported since he had been admitted, although he was convinced that no one, unless it might be John Lippard, had any suspicion that he was other than what he appeared to be, so that he did not connect the abrupt break in the escapes in any way with his own presence in the yard. The old woman still made her daily visits and provided food, which he had almost come to depend upon. His money, however, was nearly gone, and he hesitated about asking the colonel for more, not only because he was aware how scarce it was, but also because as yet he had failed to discover the least part of that which he had been sent to secure. He was beginning to consider seriously whether or not it would be wise for him to ask for his release, for if the escapes had ended he might be of more service at Valley Forge than in his idle life among the prisoners.

The men in the hut to which he had been assigned had been friendly, but he had not been able to learn any more from them than from the others, and, in fact, it was only at night when they stretched themselves upon the floor that they could be said to be together.

Henry had shared in turn with them the food he daily purchased from the old woman, but his generosity was still unrewarded in the line he most desired it to be.

He at last came to the conclusion that these men, at least, knew nothing of the means by which their former comrades had escaped. He had now been for more than two weeks an inmate of the prisoners' camp, and nothing had been attempted. As the night drew on he resolved that on the morrow he would send word to the colonel and ask for permission to return to Valley Forge.

A drizzly rain had been falling in the afternoon, which at nightfall increased to a steady downpour. The men were all driven to the shelter of their huts, and not long after they had received their supper they wrapped themselves in their blankets and stretched themselves upon the floor, prepared to forget the storm by sleeping.

How long Henry had been asleep he had no means of knowing, when he was awakened by the touch of a hand upon his shoulder and the voice of some one whispering in his ear.

"It's time," said the voice. "Don't stir till you see me move to the door."

Before the young lieutenant could reply it

flashed into his mind that here, perhaps, was the very opportunity for which he had been waiting. Instantly every sense was alert, and as he turned upon his side to enable him to perceive what was being done his heart was beating violently under his excitement.

He could see in the dim light that the man was enveloped in a cloak and that he moved slowly and stepped cautiously among the sleeping men. He could see him as he bent low over a motionless form and doubtless whispered to it what had been said to himself, but he now obtained a momentary glimpse of a light which indicated that the man was holding a dark lantern in his hand. To his surprise the man moved again toward him and stepped noiselessly to his side. There was a momentary gleam of the light upon his face, and then the stranger whispered, "You're not the man — but come. Sach!" he added warningly, as one of the sleepers moved uneasily in his position.

For a moment the silence and darkness in the room were intense, and then Henry felt a gentle tug upon his sleeve, and was aware that the time for action had now arrived.

As he slowly approached the door he perceived that it was slowly and silently opened

from without, and as soon as he and his two unknown companions had passed out it was again closed and barred.

There were now four of them outside the hut. The rain was falling steadily, and the darkness at first seemed to be too dense to enable Henry to see about him. In a brief time, however, his eyes became somewhat accustomed to the dim light, and when at a whispered word he was bidden to follow he at once began to move through the storm. He had no conception of where they were going or who the men were with whom he found himself, but he was determined now to go on and learn if possible what it was his unknown companions were attempting to do.

Slowly and cautiously the men advanced until they arrived at a place near the fence, where they halted. The leader tapped lightly upon the fence, and instantly there was a like response from the opposite side. To Henry's intense surprise he perceived that a part of the fence was quietly removed, and then the men passed through the opening one by one. As soon as all had gained the outer side, they listened intently for a moment, and then, when it was learned that the guard was not near, the portion of the fence

that had been removed was quickly and noiselessly restored to its place, and then, at a low word from the leader they all began to move stealthily out into the night. Henry could see that there was still some fear that the guard might return and discover them, and that all were prepared to silence him instantly; but the escape was not discovered, and soon they were increasing the speed at which they were moving. The one who had been waiting for them outside the fence had been wrapped in a cloak, but now the cloak was discarded, and Henry almost expressed his astonishment audibly when he perceived who their guide was.

CHAPTER XXX

A DISCLOSURE

IT was the old woman whom he had frequently seen in the prison yard disposing of her viands to the hungry men and from whom he himself had frequently purchased food, who now stood before him. Much of her apparent weakness was gone, and as she moved about in the midst of the little band she was almost as energetic and certainly was as excited as if she had been a young girl.

The astonishment of Henry was so great that he watched her, almost unmindful of his own perilous position, but suddenly becoming aware that the eyes of John Lippard, who with a sinking of his heart he perceived was also one of the number, were upon him, he quickly regained his self-control and endeavored to appear unmindful of the actions of the woman. A part of the mystery of the disappearance of the former prisoners was now made clear. The removal of a section of the fence, the stealthy approach of the man

to the hut, the silent withdrawal of the selected men were all understood now, but the fact that John Lippard was in the company was something that greatly increased his own peril and uneasiness as well.

Previously he had thought that if he should discover the means of escaping from the yard or should be able to make his way out with those who were escaping, that he would have no difficulty in breaking away and in returning to the place with the information he had secured. But now he began to fear that he might not be able, at least not without great difficulty, to free himself from his troublesome companions. Not one of the men did he recognize except John Lippard, and that the man would soon declare his identity he had no doubt.

However, there was but little time afforded for fears or doubts, for one of the men, who appeared to be the guide, gave the word for them to follow him, and the little band at once set forth, leaving the chattering old woman behind them.

Their advance was difficult, for the rain was still falling and the ground beneath their feet was wet and slippery. Sometimes the route led across a sandy field and then changed

to the woods, where the wet boughs of the trees struck them in the face or dashed their moisture over the running men. Slight heed was given these things, for the one desire seemed to be to place the greatest possible distance between them and the prison yard they had left before the morning light should come. On and still on they pushed their way.

There were moments when Henry was tempted to dart into the adjacent woods and escape from his comrades. It would be easy to do this, he assured himself, but every time when the suggestion presented itself he restrained his impulse, both because he had not as yet learned all that he hoped to and also because the very presence of John Lippard in the company was something that demanded an explanation he had not as yet secured. That Jack had recognized him he somehow felt convinced, but as they pushed forward and the man was still silent he began to question if there might not be something in the confidence which Captain Martin had expressed and evidently felt in him. And yet Henry himself was convinced of the treachery of John Lippard, and he was fearful of his own betrayal, but still he kept on with the men

and just before the dawn a halt was made. There was a brief whispered consultation between the guide and one of the men, and then the guide advanced a few yards and gave a low, peculiar whistle. This call was quickly answered by some one who could not be seen, and the party instantly resumed its way and hastened forward.

They had not advanced more than a hundred yards when they halted before a building which Henry saw was a low stone barn. Into this they all entered, the door being opened for them by a man who had joined them and whom the young lieutenant instantly concluded must be the one who had replied to the whistle of the guide. Hungry and weary from the toil of the march, all the men were glad to seek the places which were assigned them between the hay and the outer wall. As daylight soon appeared Henry perceived that he was able to peer out into the yard through the cracks in the wall. He was now alone, for no two of the men had been assigned to one hiding-place, and he could see and hear all that occurred in the yard outside.

In the early morning a party of soldiers rode into the yard and summoned the farmer

who dwelt in the adjoining house, for the barn was almost a lean-to of the dwelling. They were Continentals, Henry instantly perceived, and his excitement was keen as he listened intently to the conversation that ensued.

"Some of our prisoners got away last night," said the leader, "and we're out scouring the country for them. Have you seen anything of any strange men hereabouts?"

"Naw," replied the farmer in a surly tone.

"No one been here?"

"Naw," repeated the farmer in tones still more surly.

"They might be hiding in your barn without your knowledge."

"Think I'd know it if they was there."

"We might take a look," suggested the soldier.

"Look all ye please an' welcome," growled the farmer.

There was a brief interview among the soldiers, and then the one in command turned again to the farmer, saying, "We'll push on now, but if you see anything of these men, you report it!"

The farmer made no reply and the soldiers at once rode out of the yard. It certainly had been a narrow escape, and Henry felt a measure

of relief, for he had not as yet secured all the information he desired, and if Jack Lippard did not speak or had not recognized him, as the young lieutenant was beginning to trust he had not, then there was much more to gain before he would be willing to desert his new companions.

Food was brought the hidden prisoners soon after, but they did not come forth from their places of concealment throughout the day. When evening came, however, they were again summoned and stood together on the floor of the barn, preparing to resume their flight. They had had nothing to eat since morning, and their hunger and impatience were manifesting themselves in an unmistakable manner.

Their guide, apparently unmindful of their discomfort, said sharply, "Before I go I'm goin' to have the oath of every one o' ye. Here, you," he said, pointing to Henry as he spoke, "step up here. I'll take you first, seein' as how I don't know who you are. Now, say after me, 'I solemnly swear with my hand on the Book never to tell anybody how I escaped, or who helped me, or where I went, so help me God!'"

For a moment Henry was almost staggered by the unexpected demand. An oath to him

was a very serious matter, and to take it would mean that the very purpose for which he had entered upon his perilous task must be abandoned. While he stood uncertain as to what was best for him to do, John Lippard suddenly spoke up and said, "Drop it, man ! This is no time for such tomfoolery. You'd a good deal better feed us than make us swear !"

His comrades at once expressed themselves as being heartily of the same mind, and the guide, with apparent reluctance, desisted, and returning to the house, soon brought the food for which the hungry men were clamoring.

To Henry's delight the oath was not again referred to, and as soon as the supper had been eaten the party set forth on its nightly march. Henry was exceedingly desirous of remembering the route of their journey, but the direction was changed so frequently and the region was so unknown that he found great difficulty in keeping in mind the various points they were passing.

When day again came, to Henry's intense surprise, they halted at an old burying-ground, and to his horror the guide at once removed a headstone, which yielded easily to his pull. When this was removed an entrance into a tomb was seen sufficiently large to admit the

men one by one, and in this manner they descended into the abode of the dead, Henry himself following the others in their descent, though his heart was beating furiously in his excitement.

When he had entered, however, he speedily perceived that the place was a large and somewhat roomy vault, and that doubtless any bodies that had been placed there had been removed and the space had been enlarged for the very purpose for which it was then being used.

The guide had descended with the men, and when all had entered, he said to the leader, "Now, I'll go back and carry word to the man who'll come for ye to-night. I'll see that something to eat is sent here and then" —

Suddenly the man stopped as the sound of voices outside could be heard. "Look at that grave," some one was saying. "The headstone's fallen down and the place is cavin' in, as sure's you're born. Let's look at it."

It was too dark to enable Henry to perceive the faces of his comrades, but the very silence itself was eloquent with the fear of discovery which possessed them all. The sound of the footsteps of the men approaching the hiding-place could be distinctly heard. Suddenly

the guide emitted a groan that was startling. The sound of the approaching footsteps ceased abruptly and then the groaning was repeated, all of the men in the tomb joining as the purpose of the guide was perceived.

This time when the sound ceased the footsteps outside could be more distinctly heard, and it was evident that the men who had been approaching the grave from a motive of curiosity had had that motive fully satisfied, for they were fleeing from the spot with a haste that was as expressive as it was undignified. Henry and the guide instantly peered out from the opening and watched the fleeing men as long as they could be seen in the dim light. Then, laughing heartily, they rejoined their fellows.

"We've seen the last o' those men," said the guide. "They won't bother us again."

"Some one else may find us, though," suggested the leader.

"Serve 'em the same way. Ye're as safe here as ye'd be in Clinton's quarters. Now I'll start out and I'll see that ye have something t' eat, and that ye have a good guide for the night."

The man at once departed, first restoring the headstone to its place, and the inmates of

the tomb were not again disturbed. At night-fall the expected guide arrived and the nightly march was resumed, but for some reason which Henry was unable to understand the direction was again frequently changed. It was evident that the men were not moving without some definite plan, but just what it was he was not able to perceive.

That night and the night following were used in marching, the men each day remaining hidden, one day in a barn and the other day in a haystack that was not far distant from a farmhouse. Food was provided by men who were evidently in league with the British, and Henry was doing his utmost to fix them and the places in his memory.

When the halt at the haystack was made it was later in the morning than was usually the case when they stopped, and the sun had been above the horizon for an hour or more. The air was also much warmer, and for a brief time the men seated themselves together on the sheltered side of the stack, keeping a careful lookout and waiting for their breakfast to be brought to them.

There had been a brief silence, for all were wearied by the night march, — a silence that was abruptly broken by John Lippard. "I've

a story to tell," he began, "and while we're waitin' for our breakfast is a good time for me to tell it."

Henry glanced up at his face as the man spoke, and his heart instantly sank in the fear that almost overwhelmed him.

Apparently unmindful of the effect of his words, John Lippard continued. "As ye know, I've had a bit o' a deal with both sides since this war began. I was in the Pennsylvania militia, but I was n't so strong for the Colonies but that I was able to help the other side on a bit, though it's no one's business just what I did or how I did it, either. Maybe if I'd been treated right I'd have been 's good a Continental's any, but now I'm for the king, an' I don't care who knows it."

"God bless him," interrupted one of the men solemnly.

"Well, one time, a spell ago, when I was servin' in the Pennsylvania militia an' the army was in the camp back at Morristown, an' afore the rebels had had their boots whipped off o' 'em at Brandywine and Germantown, I was out foragin' one day, for the rebels don't give you much t' eat, as we've all o' us found out since we've been took

prisoners, I'm thinkin'. Well, as I was sayin', I happened t' be out foragin' — not entirely on my own account either, for there were some o' the officers who were mighty willin' to share with me whatever I found — an' I happened to find a pig strayin' 'round loose in the road. Now what would you do with a pig that you happened to find like that?" he suddenly demanded, looking quickly up as he spoke.

Henry's face was ghastly, but neither John Lippard nor his companions seemed to be aware of it. One of the men laughed as he said, "I'd put the pig in my pocket."

"Exactly what I did ; or rather, I slung it over my shoulder and started back to camp with it," said John Lippard. "On my way I fell in with a young fool who, just because he was a leftenant, thought he was the biggest man on earth. An' what d'ye think he did?"

"Took your pig away from you," suggested one of the men.

"That would n't 'a' been anything, but the fool went and reported me, and what d'ye s'pose I got? Thirty-nine lashes on the bare back!" he added savagely, replying to his

own question. "An' the man that did it is that man there!"

As John Lippard spoke he rose to his feet, and, his face blazing with uncontrolled rage, pointed at Lieutenant Henry Miner.

CHAPTER XXXI

THE CONTEST NEAR THE HAYSTACK

A SILENCE had fallen over the little company when John Lippard ceased speaking, and the young lieutenant was aware that he was the centre of observation. That the glances he received were not friendly was evident, and the almost uncontrollable rage of John Lippard as he advanced toward him caused his pale face to become still more ghastly. The position in which he was seated, with his back against the hay, his companions being seated in a semicircle before him, instantly banished the wild thought that arose in his mind of making a dash through their midst and running for the shelter of the woods which were not far away. He had no means by which he might defend himself, and as he saw John Lippard draw a knife from the bosom of his shirt he realized that his own immediate peril was greatly increased.

The action of the man, however, instantly caused his companions to leap to their feet,

and rushing in between him and the young lieutenant, they stood glaring at both men as if they were minded to deal in a harsh manner with each.

“What are you doing?” demanded the leader savagely of John Lippard.

“Leave me alone an’ you ’ll soon see!” retorted the angry man, striving at the same time to break through them.

In an instant his companions had seized and disarmed him, and as they held him firmly, the leader in a low voice said, “We’ve had enough of this, Jack! I don’t care who the man is, you’re not going to make trouble for us all. We’re none too sure of ourselves any way here, and for you to let all the world know by your wild yells that all they’ve got to do is to come out and take us, is something we can’t and won’t allow. No, no, Jack!” he added in a more quiet manner. “Leave the man alone. His case will be attended to; you need have no fear of that.”

Quickly the bearing of the angry man changed, the flush of anger faded from his face, and speaking in his ordinary tones he said, “Ye’re right an’ I’m wrong. I won’t touch the fellow. I’d been watching him ever since we started, an’ at last my back got

to burnin' so that I did n't seem to be able to help myself. But I'm all right now," he added. "Ye need n't be a bit afraid that I'll make any more trouble."

Apparently satisfied that the immediate danger was past, the leader turned to Henry and said, "Is what this man says the truth?"

"A part of it is."

"We'll find out more about that afterwards. For the present I want you to give me your word that you'll not try to escape, nor try to get us into trouble. We'll help you keep your promise," he added threateningly.

"I promise that I won't try to get away," said Henry quietly, "and as for getting you into trouble, I couldn't do that if I wanted to, for I have n't much of an idea where we are."

The leader did not continue the conversation, and all the men soon resumed the positions they had occupied at the outbreak of the trouble. A silence rested over all, and every man appeared to be busy with his own thoughts. Henry glanced occasionally at John Lippard, but the man did not appear to be aware of his presence, and the expression upon his face betrayed nothing as to his purpose. He had subsided for the time at least,

but the young lieutenant thought he knew the man too well for him to trust him. For the present there was peace, but he felt confident that the disclosure which Jack had made would soon increase the peril in which he now found himself, and that was already almost more than he felt that he could endure.

The sun climbed higher into the heavens, but the man who was to bring them food had not yet appeared. Wearied by the long march in the preceding night, and hungry from the long time that had elapsed since they had tasted food, the men soon began to manifest an impatience which was doubly alarming to their leader.

At last, unable to endure the strain longer, he rose to his feet and said, "There's been a mistake somewhere. If you'll stay here I'll go out and look about and see what can be done."

An eager assent was given to his suggestion and the man at once departed, but an hour afterwards, when he returned to the hiding-place, he brought neither food nor any report that would aid them. "What's to be done?" he inquired.

"What's the country hereabouts?" said

one of the men in response. "Any houses near here?"

"Only one that I could see, and that does n't appear to be occupied."

"Then I suggest that we all go out in different directions, and perhaps some of us will be able to stir up something."

"Stir up too much, I'm afraid," said the leader thoughtfully. "But I don't know that there is anything else for us to do. We'll have to be careful, and whether we find anything or not we must all be back here by the middle of the afternoon. But what'll we do with him?" he suddenly added, as he pointed at Henry. "We can't leave him here alone, and we must n't let him go out alone either."

"That's right," responded one of the men quickly. "It never will do to take him or leave him."

"Let him stay here and let Jack Lippard stay to guard him. I don't think he'll be likely to get away from Jack," suggested another.

"Hardly," responded the leader, smiling grimly as he spoke. "Well, I don't know but that's the best plan for us to follow. Think you can look after him, Jack, till we come back?"

"I'll try," said John Lippard quietly.

"Then we'll start," said the leader, and soon Henry was left alone with his enemy under the shelter of the haystack. The one pistol which was in possession of the party had been given by the leader to John Lippard, doubtless believing that its mere possession would be sufficient to prevent the young lieutenant from making any attempt to escape. Unknown to them all, however, he had loaded it only with powder, and as he departed he said to John, "If the rebel tries to get away, shoot him. But if he is quiet don't make any noise, for your sake and for us all."

The man had promised implicit obedience, but Henry Miner, fully aware how little he was to be trusted, did not once in the first half hour that passed after the departure of the men withdraw his eyes from his guard. Neither had spoken, and the silence seemed to increase the feeling of depression that had settled upon the young prisoner, for such in fact he now knew himself to be. Somehow he felt assured that his effort to aid was destined to be defeated, and that instead of being a voluntary prisoner among the men whom his own army had captured, soon he would be a prisoner in truth and shut behind

the walls of the jail in Philadelphia, where he had understood the redcoats confined their own prisoners of war. The prospect certainly was not cheering, and as he watched Jack, who was seated near him and holding the pistol in his hand, his fears steadily increased.

Suddenly John Lippard leaped to his feet, and Henry, startled by the unexpected action, also instantly arose, and the two men stood facing each other. The eyes of the elder man were blazing with rage, and it was not difficult for Henry to understand that his enemy believed that his hour of vengeance had arrived.

Henry Miner was no coward, but he was aware that his knees were unsteady as he stood watching the man before him. For a brief time neither spoke, and then John Lippard said, "Well, my time has come at last, and I've been waiting a long while for it."

The young lieutenant did not reply, but his face became a shade paler as he looked steadily at the man before him.

"Yes, my time's come," repeated John Lippard, "an' I don't know but I'll give ye time to say your prayers. But ye want t' be quick 'bout it."

Henry Miner neither moved nor replied, and still stood gazing intently at his enemy.

“All right, if ye don’t want to,” said John with a laugh. “If I had some one here t’ help me I’d give ye a chance to look at my back, before I finish ye. I think ye’d find the sight an int’reesting one, leastwise it is to me, an’ I think ’t would sort o’ prepare ye for what’s to come.”

Still Henry Miner did not move, but stood watching the man before him with an intensity that even John Lippard could not ignore. “Any special message ye’d like t’ have me give any one?” he inquired. “I know I’m not called upon t’ be so merciful, but I thought I’d” —

Suddenly Henry darted forward in a wild attempt to seize the hand which held the pistol before it could be fired, but John Lippard evidently had been prepared for this very action, for instantly he discharged his weapon. There was a flash, a loud report, and for an instant Henry felt almost stunned; but quickly aware that he was unharmed, he again leaped forward at the man, who he knew had another weapon concealed in the bosom of his shirt. The men grappled and quickly fell together to the ground, and then followed a struggle that in itself was an epitome of all the horrors of war. Over and over they rolled, each ex-

erting all the strength he possessed and striving desperately to hold the other. In Henry's left hand he held the right hand of his adversary, while his own right was held by the left hand of John Lippard, and neither dared to relax his hold to attempt to draw the knife from its place.

Henry Miner was strong, but his contestant was heavier and even stronger than he. But courage was born of desperation, and with a fierceness indescribable the young officer fought for his life. He took no thought of time, nor could he have told whether it was day or night, for sometimes everything became black before his eyes. Bending, twisting, turning, the two men continued their struggle, the momentary advantage which one might gain instantly lost in the redoubled efforts of the other.

With a sob Henry soon realized that his strength was nearly gone. If John Lippard continued the struggle much longer he knew what the issue must be. In sheer desperation at the thought he savagely exerted himself once more, but the effort he felt was vain. Slowly yet steadily he could feel that his arms were being forced to the ground. He could even see the gleam of triumph that flashed from the



HENRY NOW REALIZED THAT HE HAD LOST

eyes of his foe. A roaring sounded in his ears, and he almost fancied that he could hear the voices of men not far away. The contest was nearly at an end, and Henry now realized that he had lost.

Suddenly, however, he became convinced that the sound of voices which he had imagined he had heard was real. He strove to cry aloud, to call for help, but the effort was more than he had strength to accomplish. The grasp in which he was held was not relaxed, and he was hardly aware that there was a rush of men upon them and that the two contestants were forcibly torn apart. Arms were about him, supporting his helpless body, but he could not reply to the questions that were asked of him. He could see that John Lippard was almost as exhausted as he, and that he too could not answer the questions which were asked of him.

There was, however, but a brief delay, for the men, assisting their prisoners to walk, speedily departed with them, moving toward the adjacent woods. Here an opportunity to rest was granted, and as soon as Henry had in part recovered from the effects of his desperate encounter, he became aware that he was in the hands of a half dozen men whom, from

their appearance, he took to be farmers. But it was impossible to determine to which side they belonged. They were conversing in low tones, but he was able to hear a part of what was said, and instantly he began to listen intently.

"What do you say we should do with 'em, Joe?" one inquired.

"Take 'em to Valley Forge," replied the man who had been addressed.

Henry's heart leaped within him at the words, for now he was assured that they were friends and not foes.

"How far is it?" the first speaker was asking.

"About a dozen miles or so," replied Joe.

"Come along, then," said the other, and soon the march was resumed.

Henry was walking beside "Joe," and eager to explain who he was, he said, "How soon will we be at Valley Forge?"

"As soon's we get there," replied Joe glumly.

"Look here," said Henry quickly, "I'm no redcoat! I'm one of the Pennsylvania militia" —

"Perhaps you might be General Washington."

“No, I’m not,” replied Henry soberly. “But I was a prisoner of those prisoners. I’m no redcoat, I tell you. I’m as good a friend of the Colonies as you are, and I can prove it to you, too!”

“You just happened to be in bad company,” laughed Joe.

“I’m Lieutenant” —

“I don’t care if you are Alexander the Great, you’ve got to come ’long with us. You can tell your stories to them that know; but as far as I’m concerned I’m going to take you straight to Valley Forge.”

Assured that all present attempts to explain who he was would be useless, the young lieutenant became quiet and passively followed his captors, as they swiftly led the way through the sombre forest.

CHAPTER XXXII

CONCLUSION

AFTER a march which consumed several hours and was frequently broken by the stops for rest that both prisoners required, the lines at Valley Forge were entered and the two men whom the farmers had taken were turned over to the soldiers and speedily lodged in the guardhouse. Shivering with the cold, for his garments were in tatters, almost exhausted by the efforts which he had been compelled to make to keep up with his captors, Henry Miner nevertheless at once endeavored to explain to the guard who he was and how it had come to pass that he was a prisoner in the army of which he himself was an officer.

But the guard was incredulous, and for a time Henry was unable to convince him that he was different from what he appeared to be. At last in desperation he said, "If you don't believe what I say, will you take a letter to Captain Martin for me? That won't do any

harm to you, and I know it will help me. Will you do it?"

"I can't take it," said the guard hesitatingly.

"You can send it by some one, can't you?"

"I might do that. Yes, I'll do that much."

After some difficulty the means for writing a letter were obtained and a brief note was written, in which the young lieutenant begged of his friend to come to his aid. This letter was at once dispatched, and with an impatience which it was almost impossible for him to control Henry waited for the coming of the captain, assured now that his troubles were near their end.

But the hours passed, and no word came from his friend. The guard had been relieved, and the mocking smile with which he had departed had been as irritating to Henry as the captivity itself. Even John Lippard, who had not spoken since they had been brought into the camp, had added to his chagrin by the leer which now appeared upon his face.

The long night passed, and still no word had come from Captain Martin. Wretched and miserable, Henry waited until afternoon,

unable to understand what the delay might mean, and his fear increased that his letter had not been sent or that a great mistake had somewhere been made. He was about to beg of the guard — for the same man was on duty again who had sent his note on the preceding day — to try once more, when he was delighted by the appearance of the captain himself.

“I was not in the camp yesterday,” he explained as soon as he had warmly greeted the young prisoner, “and have only just come back. I found your note and am here. Now the first thing we’ll do will be to get you out of this place, and then we’ll listen to your story.”

Henry’s release was speedily obtained, and as they departed from the guardhouse the captain wrapped a blanket around his shivering friend, but his action could not entirely hide the smile that crept over his face as he did so.

“Oh, I know I am not a very attractive man at the present time,” began the lieutenant.

“Yes, you are, lad! Never more so in all your life,” interrupted the captain. “It’s true your uniform needs repairs, but then I

never thought *that* uniform very attractive, even at its best. And I've seen you, too, when your face had been shaved and your general appearance was not quite so woe-begone; but still I don't know that I ever saw you when I thought you looked better than you do to-day."

Henry made no reply, nor did either speak again until they had arrived at the captain's quarters. There, after a scanty meal had been served and a change of clothing had been secured, the young lieutenant related the story he had to tell.

His friend sat listening intently, only interrupting by an occasional question, and when at last Henry had told all, he said quietly, "I think you did well. I fancy you know what next is to be done?"

"Deal with Jack Lippard," said Henry quickly.

"Jack will receive his deserts; you may be well assured of that. But it was of yourself I was speaking."

"No, sir, I don't think I know, then," said Henry.

"You are to go back with your story, tell it to the colonel, arrest all who had any part in your escape, and even retrace the way you

went when you escaped from the prison yard and lay hold upon every Tory who helped you. I know it 's a bit hard," he added quickly, as he perceived that Henry's face fell, "but really, I don't think it's any harder than the life here. You have no conception of what that is. And no one can do this work except yourself, and it is not necessary for me to explain to you its importance."

"When shall I start?" inquired Henry simply.

"To-morrow morning. This time, however, I think we shall be able to provide you a horse. There are very few horses in Valley Forge, so I hope you will appreciate the compliment which is done you."

On the following day Henry, accompanied by Hugh, and each mounted upon a horse, set forth from the camp. Their journey was successfully accomplished; the young lieutenant was able to make his report to the colonel, and then was sent in company with a small force to attempt to follow the way which had been used in the escape. In spite of the difficulties of the previous journey, Henry was able to follow for the greater part the line of march, and several of the Tories who had assisted the escaping prisoners were placed under

arrest. He heard, too, that the visits of the "feeblé" old woman into the prisoners' yard with her basket of viands abruptly ceased, and that in the following months of the winter few indeed were the men who escaped.

With this task accomplished, Henry returned to his place in Valley Forge. As to what had been done with John Lippard he was unable to learn. Captain Martin, in response to his inquiries, would simply remark that "Jack had been treated as he justly deserved."

"But he owned up that he was playing a double game, and that he was giving the red-coats word of what we were doing," persisted Henry.

"He has received his just deserts," said the captain.

"Was he hanged or shot?"

"Can you not be content with what I have told you?"

Whether he was "content" or not, Henry Miner was at least sufficiently wise to cease questioning; but it was not until long after the winter had gone that he learned of the fate of his personal enemy, and even then it may be that the mystery was almost as mysterious as before.

The terrible winter, however, afforded the

perplexed young lieutenant all the demands upon his strength and time that he required, and even the fate of the man who, he was convinced, was a traitor was soon pushed into the background. Captain Martin appeared to be content with what had been done, and Henry strove to be satisfied, for his confidence in his friend was unbounded.

The one relief which the young lieutenant found in the dreary time was in the labors of Baron Steuben. That sturdy old general, after declining the flattering offers that were made him for his services in some of the best armies of Europe, had decided to give his aid to the feeble people who were struggling for their liberty in the land across the sea. And his presence in the camp at Valley Forge was a continuous inspiration to the desperate army. Irascible, energetic ; sometimes, in his rage at the awkwardness of the men, as he drilled them in the manual, strangely mixing his German, French, and English in his expressions, still beloved of the men, the very fact that the American army left Valley Forge in the following June in reality much stronger than at the time when it had entered the camp, was in no small measure due to the zeal of the sturdy baron.

As the winter passed the sufferings of the men increased. On the 16th of February,¹ General Washington wrote the American General Clinton of New York: "For some days past there has been little less than a famine in the camp. A part of the army has been a week without any kind of flesh, and the rest three or four days. Naked and starving as they are, we cannot enough admire the incomparable patience and fidelity of the soldiery, that they have not been, ere this, excited by their sufferings to a general mutiny and desertion." There are letters from other generals in the camp at Valley Forge at this very time which plainly show that they expected "the army in all human probability to dissolve."

Congress, too, was halting, timid, and inactive. That the feeling which had been aroused by some against the great commander was prevalent even in Congress is evident from the fact that when Conway, angered at his failure to be "appreciated" by Washington, presented his resignation, although General Washington greatly desired to be rid of the presence of the troublesome man, Congress refused to accept his resignation, and left him to continue his plottings against the leader.

¹ 1778.

A smaller man than Washington would have given up his position in disgust. Serving without salary, giving himself to the uttermost to his feeble and struggling country, his army suffering and almost without supplies of any kind, Congress failing to give him the support it had promised and to which he was entitled, the friends of the treacherous General Lee and of the incompetent dandy, Gates, urging that each should be placed at the head of the army instead of the "incompetent" Washington, — a man without the great soul of the great leader would have abandoned his post and resigned in disgust.

But the greater the trial appeared to be, the greater became his greatness. Perhaps fortitude is developed only in the presence of peril, and patience only in suffering, and hope only in times of darkness. It may be that courage is only developed by danger. Whether or not these things are true, it is nevertheless true that the example of Washington among his men was an incentive to every follower. The very fibre of the new nation was being strengthened by its trials, and great men were being fashioned as well as a new nation.

In after years we have come to understand that no nation can be greater than the men

that compose it; that true men are made only as fortitude, patience, strength, and hope are developed, and that these qualities are formed only by the ability to meet and overcome difficulties. The coward may be he who runs from a school-book as well as from a redcoated soldier. The weak man is he who gives up to his difficulties, and the strong man is he who masters them. Successful men ever have to overcome their circumstances. Every man is either a victim or a victor.

This was the lesson of the lessons learned by A LIEUTENANT UNDER WASHINGTON.

The Riverside Press

*Electrotyped and printed by H. O. Houghton & Co.
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